

"WE'RE DIRTY SONS OF BITCHES":
RESIDENCE RITES OF PASSAGE AT A
SMALL MARITIME UNIVERSITY

CENTRE FOR NEWFOUNDLAND STUDIES

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“WE’RE DIRTY SONS OF BITCHES”: RESIDENCE RITES OF PASSAGE AT A
SMALL MARITIME UNIVERSITY

by

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School of Graduate Studies
in partial fulfilment of the
requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts

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Abstract

Drawing on recent folklore studies on contemporary rites of passage, this thesis examines the customs and rituals of a formerly all male university residence at a small university in Atlantic Canada. Factors including the recent addition of women to the residence and the increased role of the university administration in orientation events are examined. Based on interviews and participant observation the author examines orientation or “frosh” week activities and an annual celebration at the end of the academic year, using the paradigm set up by van Gennep of separation, transition and incorporation. The transitional stage is an integral learning stage in which the first year students are exposed to student culture, and are taught the correct behaviour for their new roles through festival, song, foodways, costume, and legend. The author proposes that elements of the transitional stage last throughout the year, and therefore suggests that residence life is an “ongoing rite of passage.”

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house, the Boddington Frosh Leaders, and the Boddington Frosh, and the houses, house committees, proctors of all the other houses. Frank Ross and Rose Andrews, the student affairs administrators, gave a lot of their time and helped me in making important connections. Matt and Sam were two memorable residents of Boddington who always tried to include me, no matter how inconvenient it may have been for them. I wish them luck in their future endeavours. I must not forget the three women who provided me with a place to stay, several meals, and great conversation (all free of charge!) throughout my fieldwork at St. Peter's, I.S., S.H., M.B..

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Table of Contents

Abstract	ii
Acknowledgements	iii
List of Illustrations	vii
Chapter One – “We are the Boddington Raiders”: Introduction and History	1
1.1 St. Peter’s	6
1.2 Configuration of School	9
1.3 Ethics	15
Chapter Two – “The Raiders of the Night”: Theory and Literature	26
2.1 Van Gennep’s <u>Rites of Passage</u>	26
2.1.1 Rites of Separation	27
2.1.2 Transition Rites	28
2.1.3 Rites of Incorporation	29
2.1.4 Social Puberty	31
2.2 Contemporary Rites of Passage	34
2.2.1 Victor Turner	35
2.2.2 Michael Robidoux	38
2.2.3 Michael Taft	39
2.3 Campus Lore	41
2.3.1 Bawdy	44
2.3.2 Play	46
2.3.3 Popular Culture Influences on the Campus	49
Chapter Three – “We’re Dirty Sons of Bitches”: Frosh Week as a Rite of Passage	57
3.1 Pre-Existing Groups	58
3.2 History of Initiation at St. Peter’s	64
3.3 Frosh Week: September 2 to 9, 2001	71
3.3.1 Day 1A and B: Sunday and Monday	74
3.3.1.1 Chant off	77
3.3.2 Day 2: Tuesday – Punishment	80
3.3.3 Day 3: Wednesday	87
3.3.4 Day 4: Thursday	88
3.3.5 Day 5: Friday	89
3.3.6 Day 6: Saturday: Condiment Slide	89
3.3.7 Day 7: “Black Sunday”	93
3.3.7.1 Laurier	95
3.3.7.2 Sacred Heart House	96
3.3.7.3 Boddington	97
3.4 Analysis	100

Chapter Four – “And We Like to Fuck and Fight”: Ongoing Rites of Passage	114
4.1 Wing Wars	115
4.1.1 The Events of the 5th	116
4.1.1.1 Tug of War	118
4.1.1.2 Belching Contest	118
4.1.1.3 Chant off	119
4.1.2 Analysis	121
4.2 House Election and House Committee, April 5th	130
4.3 April 6th Day, April 6th	132
4.3.1 Events of the Day	140
4.4 April 6th Day as Protest	149
4.5 Turnher Cup	152
4.6 House Dinner and Awards Ceremony, April 7th	156
4.7 Conclusion	159
Chapter Five – “Nothing Good Can Come From This”: Conclusion	161
5.1 Preconceptions	161
5.2 Participation	164
5.3 Perpetuation	168
5.4 ‘Persecution’	171
5.5 Conclusion	177
5.6 Future Areas of Research	179
Works Consulted	185
Primary Sources	185
Publications of or affiliated with St. Peter’s University	185
Bibliography	187
Appendices:	
Appendix I: Consent Form	200
Appendix II: Events of September 2 to 9, 2001	202
Appendix III: Boddington Songs	203
Appendix IV: Condiment Slide Contents	213
Appendix V: Slang in Common Usage at Boddington House 2001-2002	214
Appendix VI: A Public Notice Posted Throughout Boddington, April 2002	216

List of Illustrations

Figure 1	Map of St. Peter's University	10
Figure 2	Boddington Hall, as seen from the south	11
Figure 3	Boddington Hall Frosh Leader T-shirt	51
Figure 4	A decorated room in Boddington Hall	51
Figure 5	"Pierce's Ho" modified and customised Frosh T-shirt	68
Figure 6	Elephant walk	69
Figure 7	Poster in Boddington Hall	73
Figure 8	Diagram of chant off	80
Figure 9	Typical instruction area for first year students	83
Figure 10	Instruction area for "Punishment"	83
Figure 11	Boddington Proctor pouring out beer	86
Figure 12	Map of Boddington Froshing spaces	90
Figure 13	Laurier Frosh Leaders in their garbage bag smocks	92
Figure 14	Sam and the vending machine proceeds	132
Figure 15	House Pride: The April 6th Day banner	141
Figure 16	Unloading the beer, April 5th	142
Figure 17	Selling books for April 6th Day money	143
Figure 18a, b	Encouraged by his off-camera friend, this "Boddington Raider" performs.	144
Figure 19	Customising the April 6th Day shirt	145
Figure 20	Boddington women wearing their April 6th Day hats in the cafeteria	147
Figure 21	Hair augmentation: dying hair	148
Figure 22	Old April 6th Day shirt: "I Support April 6th Day"	149

CHAPTER ONE – “WE ARE THE BODDINGTON RAIDERS”: INTRODUCTION AND HISTORY

My interest in university residence life is a personal one. Almost a decade ago, in 1993, I left home to attend university. My undergraduate experience included living in a female residence for three years. This study is partially an “ethnography of self,” because at this stage in my life I consider that the time I spent living in residence was formative. It informed my values and morals and created a new community for me beyond that of my hometown and secondary school. For my friends and I, residence offered a chance to live away from home and to become our own persons, something we did not always feel capable of doing under the prying eyes of our home communities. Our time in residence represented a “rite of passage” in our transition from dependent teenagers to independent young adults. This passage interested me and I decided to explore it further by writing my thesis on university life as a contemporary rite of passage. My specific interest was in the rites of passage through which the students who live in residence pass.

By the time I came to the topic as a researcher and a folklorist I had had some personal experience with residence rituals. After my own first year Frosh experience, in my second year I was the head of orientation for the residence. My third year was spent off-campus, but in my last academic year I returned for another year in residence in the position of proctor (or residence assistant), where one of my first responsibilities included supervising or “managing” orientation activities. At the time I was informed that orientation was in the process of being changed due to ongoing concern for the well being of students and greater sensitivity to political correctness and sexual harassment issues. The university administration had not been involved before, but now they were

taking an active interest in what each house (or residence) was doing.

I suddenly found myself in a position of power that required me to become involved in stifling a form of orientation where only two years before I had encouraged it. While I had noted that some people did not enjoy orientation, and, certainly, there were parts of my own orientation and that of others that I did not enjoy, I also regarded it as a major part of my university experience. If residence life is a rite of passage, orientation or “Frosh” week is the beginning of that rite and therefore an important element in the university experience. Essentially, I was torn between my experience that orientation is a vital part of being socialised to university life, and the new idea that it is a barbaric custom that violates people’s rights.

In this study I present the rituals and traditions of one residence, Boddington Hall, based on fieldwork conducted over the course of the fall of 2001¹ and for a further weekend in April 2002. I argue that the shared experiences of students in university residences function as a rite of passage: beyond the obvious and explicit events such as orientation (or Frosh) week and graduation, it is an ongoing rite of passage. I explored this and other tensions academically when I researched the subject of university folklore in 1999 as part of an undergraduate course entitled “Language and Play” taught by Dr. Martin Lovelace. My term paper focused on Orientation Week from a female-centred perspective with special attention to the residence songs (McDavid, “Virgin”). I had realised that campus lore was a frequent topic for the folklorist, however, papers dealing with campus lore

¹ It should be noted that the World Trade Center tragedy on September 11 occurred during the duration of my fieldwork. Although it did not have much of an impact on the residences, it did have an overall affect on the campus with the incorporation of memorial services and prayer groups on campus. As atypical events, these did not fall under the mandate of this thesis and so no attempt was made to include them.

were often simply descriptions of the events and devoid of analysis, as will be discussed in Chapter Two. I decided to be more in depth in my treatment of campus lore because, having been a part of it, I realised that it was more complex than surveys and descriptive term papers would lead readers to believe. In that term paper I looked at the symbolic elements of the songs, attempted to trace some of their influences and determine the function they served for the group that used them. I felt a certain responsibility to provide some context for the practices of students in university residences. I believe that this undergraduate term paper was my first attempt to use folklore theory and to explore the meaning of a body of lore for a particular small group. Perhaps that is why my interest in residence life and rites of passage deepened, eventually led me to focus on this area for my thesis.

In order to protect the privacy of the students I interviewed, the university where I conducted research and the participants I worked with will not be identified (a copy of the consent form can be found in Appendix I). I chose to locate my study at “St. Peter’s University” because of its Catholic background and its small size. The university is at a particularly significant point in its history as it attempts to make changes in the way it orientates new students to campus, meaning that new “traditions” are evolving and old ones are being changed or replaced. For instance, Boddington, the previously all-male residence on which much of my research is based, as recently as 1996 became home to female students as well. Such changes in policy and demographics affect its customs.

Although St. Peter’s University is a unique institution, many of the practices followed there are found elsewhere. For example, using the resources of the Memorial University of Newfoundland Folklore and Language Archive, I was able to find analogous material that was collected by undergraduate students at Memorial over the past thirty years. That said,

the last decade has been one of change for many universities in terms of their orientation programming. When I presented some of my initial findings in a paper entitled “Orientation Week as a Rite of Passage” at the 2002 annual meeting of the Folklore Studies Association of Canada, in Sudbury, Ontario, I was struck by the differences in the Orientation Week practices raised by audience members. Some of the people who attended the presentation were surprised that many of the events I recounted were still going on at St. Peter’s. For example, a McMaster student in attendance reported that orientation activities there are confined to one day by the university; Laval students and faculty members reported limited orientation events as well.

Perhaps St. Peter’s University has not had to impose the limitations that McMaster put in place because it is a significantly smaller university which is not located in a large urban area, or perhaps the administration is limited in what they can control. There are limits to what an administrative board can decide and what they can impose. In small residences with high rates of returning students, like Boddington, policies that are not embraced can fail, which will be discussed further in Chapter Four. However, an overlap in Frosh Week and the first days of classes may be St. Peter’s attempt to passively limit some of the Frosh Week activities, by shortening student’s introduction to campus life rather than introducing strict guidelines. Graduate students and professors from Laval noted that their university similarly put restrictions on what fees could be charged for orientation events, thereby limiting the funding available and effectively discouraging them. Interestingly, St. Peter’s University residences are not solely dependent on the school for their activity money. Boddington accrues funds by selling T-shirts at a mark-up, which each student is expected to purchase and wear during the

course of the week. Each house also has house fees that go directly from the residents to the house committee, therefore creating a situation in which the house has its own money and can operate autonomously. The first year students, for the most part, fund their own Frosh Week and, furthermore, many of the events of St. Peter's Frosh Week – scavenger hunts, house songs, and various performances – are of little or no cost and could therefore exist without a budget. As will be discussed in Chapter Four, the Boddington House Committee also earns a percentage of the revenue from vending machines in the building, which helps to defray the cost of the end of year activities.

Clearly rites of passage and orientation practices vary from one Canadian campus to another. It seemed to me after my paper presentation to the Folklore Studies Association of Canada that some people were shocked by the practises as I related them; what I described was simply not of their experience. I presented a similar paper titled "Orientation Week as a Rite of Passage" at the Aldrich Interdisciplinary Conference at Memorial University of Newfoundland in February 2002 which generated a different response. Following this presentation, two proctors of a Memorial University residence told me of how, at Memorial, residences notoriously initiate students throughout the whole first year. They emphasised the particular severity of the initiation practices, and other informal conversations with Memorial students who have lived in the residences have confirmed this.

Thus, while university customs are generally similar, each institution's practices are unique. St. Peter's is a small university that shares a campus with a larger university, it was founded in religious belief and still maintains diocesan ties, and it has a high female to male ratio. In order to fully understand the institution, it is important to look at its history.

St. Peter's

St. Peter's has a complex past that necessitates some historical information on the time and place from which it sprung: a small rural town in Atlantic Canada with a lumber based economy.² The involvement of the Roman Catholic Church in the area came as a result of missionaries who originally ministered to the first nations peoples there in the early 18th century. By the 1790s there were significant numbers of Irish Catholic settlers due to the growth of the shipbuilding industry and the large stores of wood in the region, as well as the accessibility provided by the river. In the 1860s, St. Patrick Male Academy (also known as St. Patrick College), the predecessor of St. Peter's College, was erected. Previously, some instruction was given at the St. Patrick's rectory, built in the 1840s, although it was not in receipt of any government assistance. It existed only with the support of the church and the fees it charged the boys enrolled. St. Patrick's did not originally house an order, and was named for the patron saint of the founder of that mission.

The early history of St. Peter's was marked with problems, from rivalling religious factions to French/English debates and those surrounding the merits of religious instruction. St. Patrick's College was destroyed by fire in the late 1870s and rebuilt shortly after. In 1910 it changed its name to St. Peter's College and the administration was taken over by an order of brothers from outside the area. The name change may be

² In keeping with the effort to withhold St. Peter's identity, certain references and listings in the list of Works Consulted have not been fully referenced, and have been separated in the Works Consulted. This history is based on Bowlby, Broderick, Fraser, Johnston, and an article in the St. Peter's University student newspaper (shortened to SPSN in the citations), 28 Mar. 1990.

attributed in part to the fact that this order was already affiliated with one St. Patrick's College, and two schools with the same name would have added an element of confusion. At the end of the decade, the original St. Peter's College building was completely levelled by fire, but a rebuilt College opened the next year. In the mid-1930s it became a degree granting institution and was renamed St. Peter's University. Shortly after it was again struck by fire, causing damage to the upper half of the building. In 1938 women were admitted to the University, and between the late 1940s and 50s, a gymnasium, residence and academic buildings were erected, while Quonset huts were used to house high school classes (Fraser).

In the mid-1960s, based on the suggestion of the 1962 Royal Commission on Education, St. Peter's University moved to the province's capital two hundred kilometres away, to share a campus with the provincial university already there. In its first year it had an enrolment of 229 students (SPSN 28 Mar. 1990). The pre-existing university with whom it would now share a campus had been there since the 1800s, when it was built on a hill on what was then outskirts of the city (with the city's growth it is now more centralised).

At this point, in some ways St. Peter's lost the might it once had in its hometown. There had been debates before the move about the merits of doing so. St. Peter's forfeited its ability to instruct first year engineering students and to grant degrees for a Bachelor of Science in nursing; it is regarded by some as a very dark time in the history of the institution (SPSN 28 Mar. 1990).

Sharing a campus is a practice common to many Canadian Catholic universities, according to the Canadian Catholic Colleges and Universities:

Canada's federated and affiliated system of post-secondary institutions is an ingenious adaptation of the Oxbridge mode. By formally associating themselves with large secular institutions, the federated and affiliated colleges can offer their students not just the intimate atmosphere of a smaller setting coupled with the Roman Catholic ethos envisioned in their mission; the federated and affiliated colleges can also provide post-secondary advantages which they simply could not offer on their own: well-developed athletic facilities and varsity athletic programmes, access to a wide range of nationally and internationally respected scholars, the reputation of major well-established universities, extensive research libraries, immediate access to national student organisations, comprehensive academic programmes, and the like. The federated and affiliated system also provides an extended intellectual home base for the colleges' faculty, immediate access to extensive computer facilities and other research tools, immediate access to professional resources with respect to staff and faculty policy issues, and the like. (CCCU)

At the time of the move there were many negative implications raised by university academics, students, and townspeople who were against it. It was seen as a move which was clearly the response to the government's decision to centralise St. Peter's to the detriment of both the small town to which it was home and the province's Roman Catholic community.

Today St. Peter's has approximately 2,200 students, eighty full-time faculty, and sixty-five part-time, with one full-time chaplain. Programs offered at St. Peter's include the Bachelor of Arts, the Bachelor of Social Work, the Bachelor of Education, the Bachelor of Applied Arts in Criminal Justice, the Bachelor of Applied Arts in Gerontology, and the Bachelor of Applied Arts in Journalism. St. Peter's also offers certificate programs.

Although they have affiliation agreements, the universities remain essentially autonomous in that they do not share administration or classes. However, there have been cases where professors have taught at both institutions. Classes are open to students of either school, although credits must be transferred. For the majority of the shared

services, most significantly the library system, they are administered by the larger university but partially and proportionately funded by St. Peter's so that its students may also partake of them. With a population roughly one-fifth of the other university's and a significantly smaller number of courses and independent facilities, St. Peter's finds itself often overshadowed by the other university (Johnston). St. Peter's is located at the top of the hill, and as a result of the geography, interaction between the two universities is limited. That being said, the move to the capital has evidently been good for both the institution and the city it moved to. The university's enrolment rates are growing, and the city's economy relies largely on the government and universities along with the centralisation of services one finds in a capital city.

Because St. Peter's is the smaller university, it continues to have a more dependent role in the relationship between the two institutions. Although the other university also has arts courses, it is a comprehensive university and the largest in the province. Although St. Peter's appears to occupy about one-sixth of the landmass, it shares this school's library, bookstore and sports arena. Moves are being made by St. Peter's to develop greater independence. A student union building (of sorts) has been constructed, a gym has been built, and additional residences have been acquired off-campus (some students had previously been housed at the other school).

Configuration of School

St. Peter's University today is in a state of transition, much as it has been during many of its years as an institution. During the time of my fieldwork, the newest and largest addition to the campus was being constructed, an Applied Arts building which became the

fifth building in which classes are held, and the third in which 50% or more of the space is devoted to classes. There are three residences on the campus, and one located off-campus in a refurbished hotel. The university also owns three nearby townhouses that it rents to students. The buildings on campus total eight.

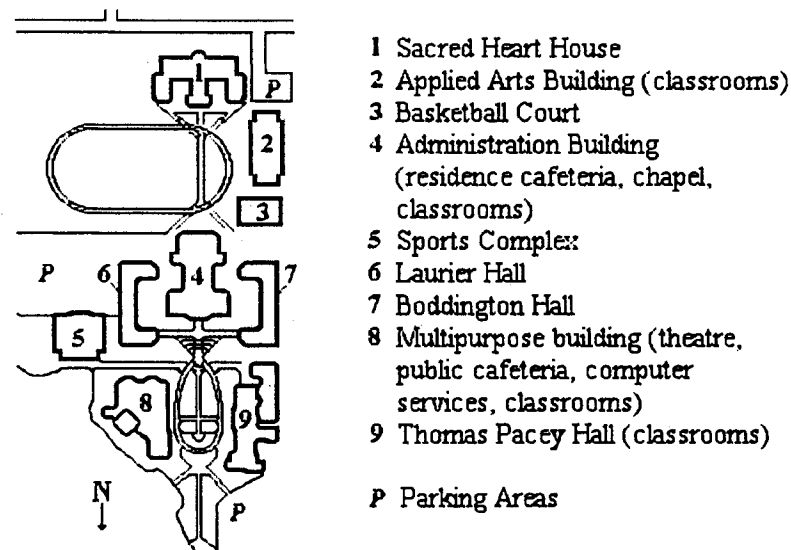


Fig. 1 Map of St. Peter's University (modified from St. Peter's University website).

During my fieldwork, the majority of my time was spent in the three on-campus residences: Boddington Hall, Laurier Hall and Sacred Heart House. As mentioned earlier, Boddington used to be solely for men, but it began to admit women in 1996. Laurier and Sacred Heart are both female-only residences. Boddington and Laurier are equal in size, housing about 200 people each, and are located on either side of the dining hall in close proximity to each other. Sacred Heart is a smaller house, with about 80 women, located at the top of the campus hill (Student Affairs Office, "Residence Guide").

Initially, I wished to focus on the female houses at St. Peter's, particularly Sacred Heart House, which, because of its removed location and its small size, is often somewhat segregated and marginalized at the university. However, when I began doing

my fieldwork, I realised that the predominantly male house on campus, Boddington, also had been marginalized in many ways. Boddington has a negative public image as a party house, which often creates problems for residents. Boddington is also the oldest student residence on campus, built in the mid-1960s when the university moved to the capital. It is one of the first three buildings, along with Sacred Heart House, which originally housed the Sacred Heart Fathers, and an administrative building that included a chapel, cafeteria, classrooms and offices (SPSN 6 Oct. 1994).

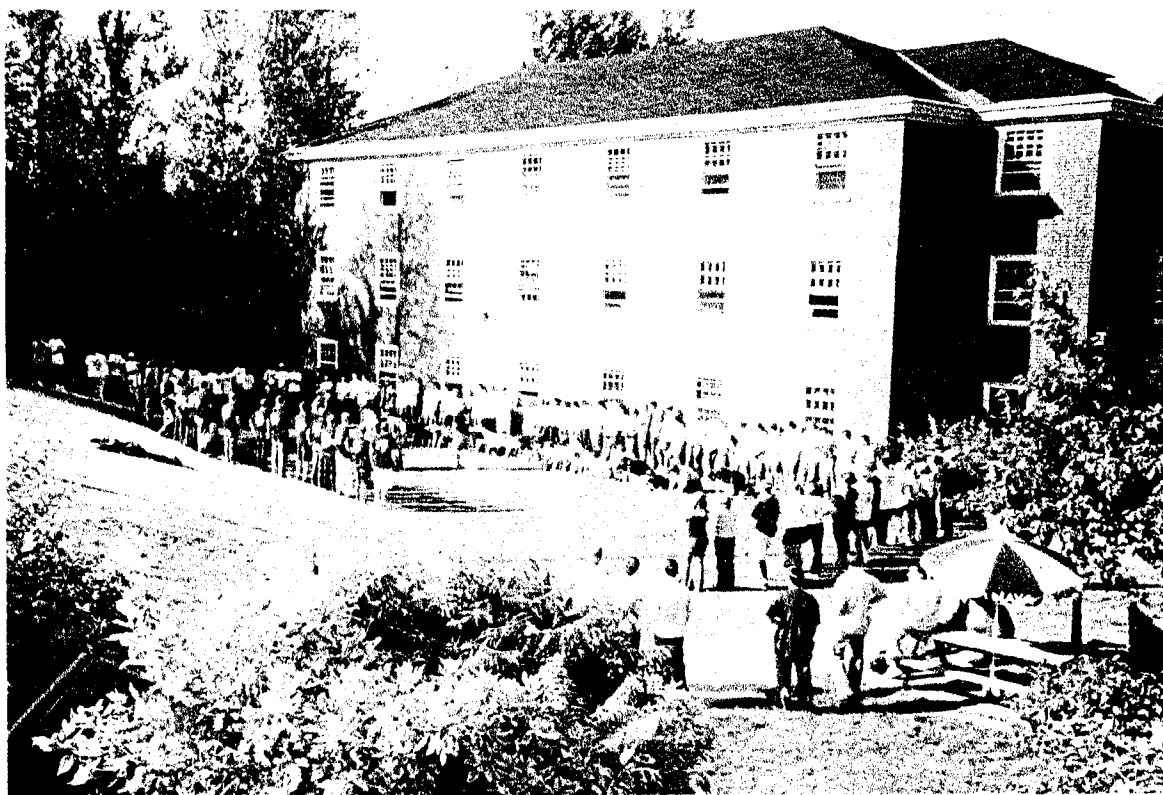


Fig. 2 Boddington Hall, as seen from the south (field photo).

Boddington has a great sense of its tradition and history. Some of these traditions extend back to its earliest days as a residence. However, it would be fair to say that the traditions of Boddington house are in a state of flux due to the changing demographics within the residence, and certainly some customs changed when women were admitted

into the house a few years ago. Boddington is a 'male' house in which men outnumber women two to one, on a campus where men are outnumbered two to one. As the only male house it was in the minority with two female residences on campus. Now that women also live in their house, men who live on campus are further in the minority (Office of University Advancement, "2001-2001 Leaders" brochure). Although women have been living in the house for a number of years now, they are confined to one floor. This area has expanded since they were first introduced into the building, when they only occupied one wing. Previously, the area the women lived in was locked after certain hours and kept segregated from the rest of the house. This year marked the first time that this is not the case and that the doors were allowed to remain open. To put this fact in context, the neighbouring institution has had co-ed housing with alternating rooms (male room, female room) on each floor since at least the early nineties (and perhaps earlier). Boddington still does not consider itself a co-ed house since there is no mixing of habitation within the house: men live on two floors and women on one. In the campus literature, Boddington is referred to as "predominately male" (Student Affairs Office, "Right Choice").

Being a member of a St. Peter's residence is akin to being pledged by a sorority or a fraternity, which do not exist on this campus. To live in Boddington Hall, is to be part of what Schoemaker terms a "high-context" situation. Schoemaker says that certain groups:

have a strong sense of social identity and social solidarity (are closely knit), are highly organized, and have a strong code of conduct (rules of behavior and means to enforce desirable behavior). These groups may share a high degree of cultural context, cultural practices, and culture-specific information. Groups exhibiting these characteristics are called high-context groups. Groups with fewer of these characteristics are called low-context groups. [...] High-context groups like these have a strong sense of groupness and as a result are more inclined to express this sense of groupness in ways that are highly marked – through artistic communication – through folklore. (Schoemaker 4)

The people who live in Boddington do have a high degree of organisation, which is shown throughout Frosh Week by their Frosh Committee and throughout the year by their House Committee. They share much in common; they live together, eat together, and attend university together. Because the university is small, many of them are in the same classes and partake in the same activities. These multiple shared contexts are further stratified by the student's need to fit in and by the administration's need to regulate behaviour within its residences. As we will see in Chapters Three, Four, and Five, the residence also uses these events to regulate behaviour extrinsic from the administration's dictates. This group is highly inter-related because of the members' multiple interactions on a daily basis. As a result, they produce a large body of lore that helps them have control over the group through its illustration of norms.

Regardless of the fact that students may form high-context groups, in general it seems that the folklore of young people has been overlooked by scholars. For example, when looking at research on university life in the Memorial University of Newfoundland Folklore and Language Archive, one finds it is often sporadic, conducted by students within their own folk groups for folklore term papers or for folklore survey cards. As one would expect with undergraduate term papers, the research is piecemeal rather than integrated; it is selective and does not provide an ethnography of Memorial University of Newfoundland residences. Furthermore topics of study are selective and usually surround a theme such as "pranks." In particular, I realised that, at St. Peter's, information concerning student life is further limited as it has no folklore program and as a result no such impetus for collection. In an informal conversation with a local researcher, he informed me that during the move from the original town to the present location, many files were lost. Some faculty and staff simply put their

papers in their basements rather than dragging them across the province. With no archive of its own, St. Peter's personnel simply retain their own papers when they leave. The same case occurs in residence, house committee papers are all retained by the individual students that hold the positions from year to year. A cultural history of the institution must be pieced together from past issues of the St. Peter's student newspaper held in the adjacent university's library and old yearbooks held in the Alumni Affairs office. St. Peter's has documented its religious and academic history rather well but, like many academic institutions, it has not always focussed on the students. The students' stories remain largely untold at St. Peter's and my study is an effort to begin to redress this.

As already mentioned, this thesis is based on two fieldtrips to St. Peter's. My original fieldwork consisted of participant observation and interviews (both informal and recorded) during six weeks at St. Peter's in September and October 2001. I decided to gather more information and returned for a brief fieldtrip in April 2002. I did this for various reasons, including having been invited by the members of Boddington house. During my initial fieldwork, many of the residents remarked that they would like me to return for April 6th Day, their end of the year party, which is discussed in Chapter Four. At the time, I had thought that this would not be feasible, but as I began writing my thesis I realised from what I knew about April 6th Day that it was a very important event in the overall rites of the house.

Further motivation came as a result of questions following my presentation at the Aldrich Interdisciplinary conference in February 2002 that made me reconsider my direction. Many people seemed concerned about what happens after Orientation Week. They wanted to know how the rest of the year played out, how relationships progressed

between house members and what happened to first year students, particularly those who resisted getting involved in Frosh Week. This had been very inconsequential to me at the time that I was doing my research, and something on which I had limited data. I therefore decided that in keeping with the expectations of the group, as well as keeping with the idea of presenting a fully rounded picture of rites at Boddington house, I should return for a second research trip.

Ethics

As I began to present about my work, I found myself being asked “what side” I was on. People seemed to want me to argue for or against orientation practices in residences. In this study I do not take one side or another in this debate; both have validity. Instead my aim is to present a student-centred exploration of residence rites of passage, recognising that students are a diverse group with different individual needs. Orientation activities that may be problematic for some students may be necessary for others in order to adjust to their new surroundings. Furthermore, as a feminist-informed, student-centred work, this study also takes into account any situations created within the university that the students I interviewed perceived as “anti-student,” whether that may be rules and regulations or less formal censure.

During my fieldwork I encountered ethical dilemmas which were created when the university administration and students did not share the same perspective. My main concern in treating the university fairly was solved by ensuring that I did not identify it by name, and the identity of the university will be unclear to most readers. In retrospect I wish I had taken the time to try to work with the ethics boards in order to get their permission to use

the name of the school. I have spent a great deal of effort trying to balance the “blurring” of details and protect anonymity with supplying enough information to give context. The students, however, will not enjoy the blanket protection that the university gets, because the St. Peter’s administration knows that I was conducting research in their residences: it knows that this thesis focuses on their institution and is very interested in hearing my conclusions. In informal conversations during my initial meetings with several faculty and administrators at St. Peter’s several mentioned that they were interested in hearing the results of this thesis. Whether this is simply an effort to be polite does not matter. The point is that since I look exclusively at student customs, there is a possibility that this information can be used at the discretion of administrators to the detriment of the students.

During my fieldwork I was very conscious of the fact that my role was quite perilous. I did not want to be a “tattletale” for the administration. For example, I wanted to talk to sub-groups of the house such as drug users, however, I did not want their position in the house or the university to be jeopardised as a result. Using pseudonyms and being general when dealing with issues that I perceive as especially problematic for the students were two ways in which I attempted to protect my informants. However, although outsiders will not realise who these individuals are, there is a possibility that other members of the university community could identify them. A hypothetical example would be in discussing the location of a drug dealer in the house. Perhaps their physical location in the house or their role in the house plays a significant part in their success as a drug dealer, but on such a small campus, to name their role or room location would be the same as naming the individual.

Both Memorial University’s and St. Peter’s ethics boards required participants to

sign consent forms. There was some resistance to signing consent forms, and my two main informants waited until I had finished my study before they signed them, while others did not read them at all, asking me instead to tell them what the sheet said. It was even questionable if those who read the sheet understood what they were signing, as one person sounded out “pseudonym” and asked me what it was and other students insisted that I could call them by their name in the thesis, simply because they knew and trusted me and therefore could not foresee any problems with me using their name. When I conducted group interviews, one or two students would fill out the consent form and the others would get the “right answers” from them, working co-operatively to minimise the work. Although I always verbally explained the document, participants often needed to be pressed to take it seriously. As well, the methodology I used was sometimes problematic. Although no one objected at the time, I realised that when I used a video camera for April 6th Day events I began to get a certain amount of showboating which was potentially damaging to the residents, and so I eventually put the camera away.

The problems of representation were further complicated because, unlike Michael Robidoux who was kept largely outside the hockey team on which he based Men at Play, I had unlimited access to the group I was working with. I could wander into the residence whenever I wanted, as long as a door was open or a student was willing to let me in. In some ways, I had even more access to the events in the houses than some of the members did, since I was able to float freely between the first year students and returning students during Orientation Week, enabling me to be sometimes on the “giving end” and sometimes on the “receiving end” of the events. In one of my early days in Boddington Hall I was referred to as “the Spy.” Although it was done somewhat affectionately, I knew it was an indicator that

people felt slightly uneasy about my presence, at least initially. There is an up side though, in that naming is an important part of the residence community, and in being named by them, even in a derogatory way, they acknowledged my existence. My reception of this nickname also seemed to be gauged; I simply laughed although I was puzzled at the time as to the implications. If this group thought I was spying on them, were they likely to take me seriously and answer my questions? It seemed, though, that this nickname was supposed to be an indicator that the group was aware of me and that my status was somewhat tenuous in the group. I also think it was intended to test my own ability to “be a good sport,” which will be discussed in Chapter Three.

I found that there were advantages to focussing on St. Peter’s. Due to the small size of the campus, I was able to make my presence known easily and quickly familiarise myself with my new environment. I soon discovered that the students relied on a highly social and verbal culture for their information. I was given a constant stream of information on my day to day comings and goings on the campus, once I overcame the major stumbling block of persuading people that St. Peter’s was worthy of study. Many were willing to tell me things informally. I found that people were often much more comfortable with fluid meeting times and unrecorded conversation. I relied heavily on the “snowball effect” whereby I met people through social networks, starting with a few individuals whose trust I earned and who then introduced me to their circle of friends. I was fortunate in that I met all the house committee members of the various residences and all the campus proctors at two different meetings on the same day, which made me easily recognisable and generally accepted on campus. The house committees and proctors are the two most easily identifiable groups in residence, as will be discussed in

Chapter Three, and so, ultimately being introduced to these two groups worked to my advantage and was the best thing that I could hope for as an ethnographer. I also spent long days on the campus (averaging 16-hour days during Frosh Week) which I think led to greater recognition and later, trust. The fact that I am also a student who has lived in residence was not lost on the participants, and they often asked me about my own experiences. At these times I attempted to be candid and frank as part of a reciprocal process.

There are particular problems with doing ethnography of young adults. Fitting into the group is very important. I was very afraid before I began my fieldwork that I would have problems interacting with students because of the age difference (I was 26 at the time, interviewing 18-23 year olds). As a result of this fieldwork it is my opinion that as long as one is young enough to possibly be of sibling age there are few problems in conducting fieldwork with young people, but perhaps this was simply my experience. If I went into this fieldwork situation at an age where these students were young enough to be my children, I expect it would have been more difficult gaining access to a wider number of contexts. My residence days were in my not-too-distant past, and since I am still in university I am not an authoritative figure, nor did I want to be in this situation. My prior experience in residence was also helpful in that I had a grasp of the basic structures of a residence house.

Attitude was another important factor and I tried to take things in stride. Not allowing myself to be easily shocked definitely worked to my advantage. As mentioned above, while I think some residents called me "the Spy" as a testing mechanism, I often noticed that others attempted to shock me, especially early in our interviews, as perhaps a

means of gauging both my personality and my ability to be a “good sport” and take a joke. I also found that it was important for me to be able to talk to them with the same grasp of popular culture that they had, to know what bands they were talking about, what drugs they were referring to, and what television shows they watched. Many conversations centred on television shows, music, drugs and alcohol. My prior interest in some of these areas as folklore topics was a definite asset. During my coursework I had written papers on drug paraphernalia as folk art, The Simpsons, and Adam Sandler.

During my fieldwork I consciously adopted behaviours of the students as opposed to those of the administration, and I think this helped to solidify my acceptance. I did most of the things I used to do when I lived in residence: I swore, I smoked, and I got up late and went to bed late. For both ethical and practical reasons, I did not drink alcohol during my fieldwork. When people talked to me about drugs, I talked to them about drugs. When people talked to me about sex, I talked to them about sex, as though it was a topic I would normally discuss in a group situation. Residence life is amazingly unguarded and candid, which was a benefit to my research, but also a challenge for me to behave in the same way. After an extensive interview with “Matt” and “Sam” from Boddington, I asked Matt, who had become quiet, if he had anything to add, to which he responded “No, I don’t have anything to add.” He then proceeded to talk to me about his worry concerning representation. To an extent it was something that both he and I had a problem with:

I don’t want the impression to be out that we are a bunch of sloppy fucking animals in Boddington. (Sam interjects: “Even though we are.”) What we told you in these interviews is the extremes that we know of (Sam: “Yeah.” Jodi: “Oh, yeah”) for a fact. I mean, general life in Boddington is pretty ... (Sam, “Pretty tame,”) it’s pretty tame. You’re not going to see, you know, I mean, as far as when we talk about how

girls are treated those are isolated cases. They are treated very well, I find. (Jodi: "Well, I mean...") A lot of guys have girlfriends, you know, we go to the bar, we have fun. Like once at the bar I saw some Boddington girls, we like, danced for two hours, came home, got some pizza, went to bed, like, alone. You know what I mean? (Jodi: "Yeah") It's not a bunch of sexual perverts lurking around trying to find a wet piece of meat to fuck (Sam laughs). You know what I mean? It's not like that but there are just cases that are just damn funny. (Field recording 17, 28 Sept. 2001)

As time passed and the interview progressed a bit, Matt said that what I had collected in interviews was the "extreme bad" from people. I sensed a real feeling of conflict in many of the people that I interviewed: they wanted to tell me things, but at the same time they did not want to jeopardise the reputation of the residence that they love and call home. Damaging the reputation of the residence could have various effects, from being shunned or excluded by housemates to leading to changes in policy by the administration. Several people responded to this problem by speaking to me on the days when I made it known that I was not carrying a tape recorder, or by asking me to turn it off and speaking to me "off the record."

The issue Matt raised here, to me, is largely about the sexualisation of men in residence. I did not want to contribute to the large body of stereotypical representations of residence; I instead wanted to look at what effect this has had on students. Women in residence are sexualised, but it is a construction of sexuality that makes women objects of desire (and harassment). Men in residence are also sexualised, however, the sexuality of young males is often feared in our society and viewed as a potentially dangerous thing. In this way, both groups are suffering from stereotyping, albeit leading to different conclusions. In the case of both the women and the men in residence, this stereotyping leads them to sometimes test the boundaries. Perhaps for this reason, during Frosh Week activities, it seems that the women play with the coquettish side of their sexuality while

the men play with their aggressive side. Although members of the women's houses may sing "come on over and take me out" or "my boobs are shaking from left to right" (Field recording 9, 16 Sept. 2001), they do not expect their male audience to take their invitation literally. Equally, when the men claim in their songs that they would "rather fuck than fight," ("We are the Boddington Raiders": see Chapter Three), they are not issuing a threat despite their reinforcement of an assumed aggressive male nature that pursues women for loveless sexual gratification ("fuck") in a somewhat threatening way ("fight").

As my study developed, Matt's concerns mirrored some of my own. I found myself faced with thorny issues of representation. How does one, especially a woman, represent young male culture fairly? Initially I wanted to focus solely on the female experience, because as a woman it was closest to my sphere of experience. I quickly changed my approach once I began my fieldwork. I was immersed in both male and female student culture and less comfortable with the idea of excluding one group in preference for another. Boddington regarded itself as a male house, yet it had a strong female presence.

During my aforementioned time in residence, when I was a student, I had been warned about the members of the male houses and told that they were animalistic sexual predators. To a certain extent, I guess I believed it, and I never felt comfortable in a male residence, whether it was for a crazy party or just an afternoon study session with someone from my class. I expected this same feeling when I went to St. Peter's for my fieldwork, and to a certain extent I did have it. The feeling dissipated throughout my fieldwork, however, I realised that men in residence did not behave the way I had been told, and that the images in popular culture and day-to-day stereotyping no more fit the

reality of the men's situation than stereotypical images of pillow fights, gratuitous nudity and lesbianism fit the women's. This is not to say that sexual assault, violence and heavy drinking do not ever occur in residence, simply that they should not be the dominant image that comes to mind when we discuss men's residences. (It should be said that I did not witness any sexual assaults or violence during my fieldwork.) This slow realisation of the stereotyping and marginalisation of the men in Boddington, combined with the vast amount of data I collected from them, encouraged me to focus on men's experience in Boddington Hall at St. Peter's University.

Several factors facilitated my fieldwork there. As previously mentioned, Boddington is the oldest student residence on campus. Because of their reputation as a "party house" residents are often happy to fit with the expectations many have when dealing with them. Many of their rites seem to happen more in the public arena than the private arena, for various reasons which we will explore in Chapter Three. From a purely practical level, the building is not locked as much during Frosh Week as the other houses are, and once I was in the building I could move freely within the building, unlike my experience in Sacred Heart House and Weaver Hall where there were locked wings within the house that limited me when I was trying to conduct fieldwork. Boddington was also appealing because they had recently adopted a new policy whereby the women's floor would not be locked. I was also not very familiar with men's residence customs; while I had personally experienced women's Frosh Week, I thought it would be interesting to observe a "predominately male" group.

Most of my interviews with students were conducted privately in their rooms. As mentioned earlier, it was vitally important not to allow myself to be easily offended, although

the material is often offensive. Objecting to statements would have created a dynamic between myself and my informants which may have been argumentative, guarded or uncomfortable. In his article on speech, slang and language at the University of Connecticut, Donald C. Simmons had similar critical reactions, although he reminds us that “the presence of some of these words and phrases, as well as the customs and practices to which they refer, in no way indicated any special, precocious depravity of University of Connecticut students” (227). Simmons’s statement about the prevalence of offensive material among university students is something to keep in mind in this study of St. Peter’s. St. Peter’s is not unique in having some of its students engage in sometimes offensive and disturbing practice; conversely, sometimes seemingly negative rituals can have positive effects for at least some students.

Before I began fieldwork I read several university histories, including one on St. Peter’s which had been published in the 1960s. I also read widely in some of the genres that I expected to encounter during my fieldwork. I utilised the Memorial University of Newfoundland Folklore and Language Archives in order to peruse their collection of MUN student folklore. In order to get a folklorist’s interpretation of university life, I read Simon Bronner’s Piled Higher and Deeper, which is essentially a survey of American student culture, and Michael Taft’s Inside These Greystone Walls, a history of the University of Saskatchewan. I watched numerous popular movies with university themes and visited various university websites.

I was curious as to whether I would find illegal activities being performed as part of residence rites of passage, or if rituals changed over time. One of my main questions here was whether or not unsanctioned activities stop or whether they simply “disappear”

by going underground. As I approached my own study of St. Peter's I wondered what purpose Orientation Week served in the socialisation of first year students. Would the gradual "phasing out" of Orientation Week that seems to be happening across Canada have an effect on the students? Is there a happy medium that can be reached for Orientation Week activities? Ultimately, is orientation the rite of passage or is it part of an ongoing process?

I examine many of these questions in Chapters Three and Four during my ethnographic discussions of Boddington's Frosh Week and year-end ritual. Chapter Five provides a conclusion and examines some possible areas of further research raised by this thesis. But first Chapter Two introduces the theoretical structure that frames my analysis of the role of ritual in the lives of first year university students in residence.

CHAPTER TWO – “THE RAIDERS OF THE NIGHT”: THEORY AND LITERATURE

The purpose of this chapter is to lay out the theoretical groundwork for the study, in particular for the rites that will be discussed more fully in the context of St. Peter's in Chapters Three and Four. The topic of university rites of passage is not a straightforward one. The locus of the study, a university, gives it particular characteristics, which in combination create a rather unique situation. This particular study lies at the intersection of rites of passage and campus lore.

Van Gennep's Rites of Passage

Although anthropologist and folklorist Arnold van Gennep (1873-1957) originally published Les Rites de Passages in 1908, it is still relevant. Its ongoing influence can be felt particularly in the fields of anthropology and folklore. Both Kimball and Dundes see his work, The Rites of Passage, as an influential precursor to functionalism and structuralism. Of this work Dundes writes, “It is probably fair to say that no example of folkloristic analysis has had more impact on the scholarly world than this classic study” (100-101).

Van Gennep realised that a person's “progression from one group to the next is accompanied by special acts” (Rites 3). These “special acts” serve a purpose; they were “actions and reactions to be regulated and guarded so that society as a whole will suffer no discomfort or injury” (Rites 3). Van Gennep writes:

Transitions from group to group and from one social situation to the next are looked on as implicit in the very fact of existence, so that a man's life comes to be made up of a succession of stages with similar ends and beginnings: birth, social puberty, marriage, fatherhood, advancement to a higher class, occupational specialisation, and death. For every one of these events there are ceremonies

whose essential purpose is to enable the individual to pass from one defined position to another which is equally well defined. Since the goal is the same, it follows of necessity that the ways of attaining it should be at least analogous, if not identical in detail (since in any case the individual involved has been modified by passing through several stages and traversing several boundaries).

Thus we encounter a wide degree of general similarity among ceremonies of birth, childhood, social puberty, betrothal, marriage, pregnancy, fatherhood, initiation into religious societies and funerals. (Rites 3)

Seeing the similarities within rites of passage allowed van Gennep to look for their common structure.

Van Gennep identified the now classic tripartite structure of rites of passage: "I think it is legitimate to single out rites of passage as a special category, which under further analysis may be subdivided into rites of separation, transition rites and rites of incorporation." He immediately qualified this analysis by saying, "These three sub-categories are not developed to the same extent by all peoples or in every ceremonial pattern" (Rites 10-11). Within his classification, separation or preliminal rites are the first step in rites of passage.

Rites of Separation

Van Gennep used this framework throughout Rites of Passage and supported his argument by illustrating various examples that fall within this structure. In van Gennep's discussion of initiation into totem groups in Australian tribes, he noted separation practices. He wrote:

The first act is separation from the previous environment, the world of women and children. The novice is secluded in the bush, in a special place, in a special hut, etc., just as a pregnant woman is; and the seclusion is accompanied by all sorts of taboos, primarily of a dietary nature. Sometimes the novice's link with his mother endures for some time, but a moment always comes, when, apparently by a violent action, he is finally separated from his mother, who often weeps for

him. As Howitt says of the Kurnai:

The intention of all that is done at this ceremony is to make a momentous change in the boy's life; the past is to be cut off from him by a gulf which he can never re-pass. His connection with his mother as her child is broken off, and he becomes henceforth attached to the men. All the sports and games of his boyhood are to be abandoned with the severance of old domestic ties between himself and his mothers and sisters. He is now to be a man, instructed in and sensible of the duties which devolve upon him as a member of the Murring community. (Rites 75, quoting Howitt 532)

The "novice" who is to be initiated is separated from their previous environment, their family, friends, and usual foodways. They have entered a new point in their life.

Transition Rites

Transition rites are partially defined by their lack of straightforward definition; the previous norms are no longer in place and the novice is in the process of being instructed, often through symbol and metaphor, about the norms that they must develop and use once they have been incorporated into the new group. To a certain extent, they are in a sacred space, whether physically or psychologically, where nothing can be assumed. In the transition stage learning for the new position takes place, and previous norms are often broken by "negative rites (taboos)" (Rites 81). The new role and identity are not yet clear, as the person is between "defined" roles. As van Gennep wrote, "For every one of these events there are ceremonies whose essential purpose is to enable the individual to pass from one defined position to another which is equally well defined" (Rites 3). As van Gennep noted of the various allowable transgressions during the transitional stage:

In Liberia, during the time when young Vai are being instructed in the legal and political customs of their people, 'theft does not seem to be regarded as a

misdemeanour for the novices, for, under the guidance of their teachers, they make nocturnal attacks against the villages of the neighborhood and, by trickery or force, steal everything that can be of use (rice, bananas, hens, and other means of subsistence) and bring them back to the sacred wood,' although they have in addition special plantations which provide them with the necessary food. Similarly, in the Bismark Archipelago the members of the Duk-duk and the Ingiet may, during the initiation ceremony, steal and pillage in the houses and plantations as much as they wish, but they must take care to leave intact the goods of other members of the secret society. As a matter of fact, these extortions have taken the form of forced payments in local currency, as they have in all Melanesia.

Moreover, the widespread occurrence of the phenomenon under discussion is quite well known. Its dynamics in the instance cited may be understood if one remembers that a suspension of social life also marks interregna and the transition between provisional and final funerals. The nature of the transitional period may also be at least a partial explanation for the sexual license permitted among a certain number of peoples (in Australia, etc.) between the beginning of the betrothal and the conclusion of the marriage, at which the woman is appropriated by a specific man. A suspension of the usual rules of living does not always bring about such excesses, but such a suspension does constitute an essential element of this phase. (Rites 115)

For these reasons, some of the possible elements of the transitional stage are carnival and festival (Shanti). As we will explore later in this chapter, Victor Turner has written extensively on the transitional stage.

Rites of Incorporation

Rites of incorporation can include various elements, such as food sharing, physical contact and symbolic exchange of property. Van Gennep wrote: "Ceremonies to lift a taboo, to determine who will be the protecting spirit, to transfer the first death, to insure all sorts of future security, are followed by rites of incorporation: libations, ceremonial visiting, consecrations of various parts of the house, the sharing of bread and salt or a beverage, the sharing of a meal" (Rites 24). He also observed:

The basic procedure is always the same, however, for either a company or

individual: they must stop, wait, go through a transitional period, enter, be incorporated. The particular rites [of incorporation] may include actual contact (e.g., a slap, a handclasp), exchanging gifts of food or valuables, eating, drinking, smoking a pipe together, sacrificing animals, sprinkling water or blood, anointing, being attached to each other, being covered together, or sitting on the same seat. Indirect contact may occur through a spokesman or through touching simultaneously or one after the other a sacred object, the statue of a local deity or a 'fetish post.' (Rites 28)

There are many elements of this tripartite structure which are found in the initiation rites as performed by Boddington, which we will explore in Chapter Three. Boddington's rites are largely transitional rites that also include elements of both separation and incorporation. Although van Gennep identified the three stages to rites of passage, he also realised that in some rites some of these stages would be less important than others. He also found that some rituals that were performed were symbolically two stages at once, adopting multiple meanings. When discussing the initiation rites of Roman Catholic and Orthodox Catholic priests he argued: "The 'tonsure' [both the head shaving and the shaved head] is the principal rite. Since it is a permanent symbol, like the veil, it is at the same time a rite of separation and incorporation" (Rites 106). Throughout my fieldwork I found that there were various points at which this merging of stages happened. For example, unlike other students, male and female first year students were usually kept separated, mainly by place of residence. There were periods of interaction followed by periods of separation, the male house residents sing their "wooing song" to residents of the female house, after which couples are paired off, literally tied together, and forced to eat a meal co-operatively in the cafeteria. This has the classic structure of separation, transition and incorporation; the students have been separated from the opposite sex previous to this, they have a transitional stage which

includes the “wooing song” and their pairing up and binding together, and the entire rite ends with their passage through doors (often a marker of a rite according to van Gennep) and a shared meal. But it is simply a sub-ritual of the larger rite; more may be going on here. As van Gennep noted: “The rite of eating and drinking together, which will be frequently mentioned in this book, is clearly a rite of incorporation, of physical union, and has been called a sacrament of communion. A union of this means may be permanent, but more often last only during the period of digestion” (Rites 29). Van Gennep discussed the work of Ciszewski on fraternal bonds of Slavic populations: “He considered rites of incorporation ‘symbolic’ and recognised four major ones: eating and drinking together, the act of tying one to another, kissing one another, and the ‘symbol of naturae imitatio’” (29). Fraternal bonding is evident in the residence rites, however there is also a sexual overtone that van Gennep associated with social puberty.

Social Puberty

The activities of Frosh Week are highly sexualised, and may be rituals of what van Gennep called “social puberty,” a state that is distinctly different from physical puberty. As Kimball noted:

Van Gennep was also insistent that puberty ceremonies were misnamed, since this type of rite occurred at ages which had no specific relation to the physical appearance of sexual maturity. He considered these rites to be primarily rites of separation from an asexual world, followed by rites of incorporation into a sexual world. (ix)

When students move away from home, they have greater opportunity for sexual expression. They now often experience a freedom that they were not offered within their parents’ home. Leaving home is when the North American young adult enters a new

phase as a sexual being, although they may have physically and emotionally matured before this point. This roughly corresponds with other analogous social puberty ages – the legal age of sexual consent, or the legal age of marriage, both in the late teens, which society sees as legal sexuality – that do not correspond with the age at which the average North American male or female enters puberty, which for the most part has occurred long before age eighteen.

During many of the university initiation rites there is segregation of the sexes, or staging of events in which the opposite sex is the spectator. As will be explained more fully in Chapter Three, there are also specific events that are somewhat based on stereotypes of courtship customs, as with the aforementioned “wooing song” and dinner. Although physical puberty and sexual activity may have occurred previous to this time, emphasis is put on these areas during Orientation Week. For example, during the Laurier Hall Frosh Week scavenger hunt participants search for items that relate to the university and its history as well fellow students. However, the incoming women must also look for tampons, condoms and a type of lipstick.

Therefore, within the context of St. Peter’s, at least two rites of initiation are occurring simultaneously: the student is being initiated into university life, and the student is being initiated into the sexualised world. The student rites may be similar to marriage rites as described by van Gennep, because “marriage constitutes the most important of the transitions from one social category to another because for at least one of the spouses it involves a change of family, clan, village, or tribe, and sometimes the newly married couple even establish residence in a new house” (116). The magnitude of the changes associated with the transition to marriage is comparable to what these new

students are experiencing. They have left their family and community, and now live in a new house. However, the comparison ends there because in residence rites the student is simultaneously inducted into a same sex group and gains an innate understanding of what it is to be a member of that group.

The person is also initiated into the residence and the university, a social world and an academic world. This dualism is explicit as the residence and the university each hold their own ceremonies during the first week: the university has "Orientation Week" while the residences have "Frosh Week." These two operate exclusive of each other, and influence each other only as much as the residences attempt not to hold activities at the same time as the university. This further complicates what is going on in the university-wide rites of passage, because in this first week two different rites are paired together. Although they are linked, they are also separate in many ways. When discussing the closely related yet different rites surrounding betrothal and marriage van Gennep found that "the pattern of rites of passage is more complicated here than in the ceremonies previously discussed" (Rites 117). This is due to the fact that most rites occur independently rather than together or in quick succession. This complication of the academic and social initiation has caused me to focus, when possible, on social initiation, thereby presenting a clearer picture of what is actually happening.

When dealing with university rites, one must turn not only to van Gennep's classic work but also to his subsequent interpretation by Victor Turner and further by writers such as Michael Robidoux and Michael Taft who consider "contemporary rites of passage."

Contemporary Rites of Passage

“Contemporary rites of passage” is a phrase that can have various interpretations, while here I use it to mean those rites of passage that are ongoing, the term has also been linked with rites that are urban or modern. Contemporary rites of passage are not typically clearly defined in what makes them different or distinct from rites of passage, although scholars usually identify Turner with contemporary rites and van Gennep with rites in general. Contemporary rites of passage may share elements held in common with their predecessor, the traditional rites of passage discussed earlier in the chapter. When discussing traditional rites of passage, van Gennep dealt with movement between “well defined groups.” In contemporary North American rites of passage, however, the groups may not be so well defined; they may be less homogeneous and more heterogeneous. The rites are less likely to be the traditional rites of tribes and villages and more likely to be the modern rites of urbanised people with varied backgrounds, people who may have different ethnicity and religious beliefs but who are unified through their present group membership (see Mahdi, et. al. for a discussion of contemporary rites of passage for North American young adults).

In arguing for Star Trek convention attendance to be considered a contemporary rite, Jennifer Porter writes, “Voluntarism is the key constituent of leisure pursuits, whereas obligatoriness constitutes the frame of tribal ritual” (249-47). In the case of Star Trek fans as pilgrims, there is not really a sense of obligation to attend, however, in the case of residence students, there are the elements of play and voluntarism juxtaposed with the obligations (and expectations) imposed by family members and house residents to fit in. The student does not want to disappoint and as such they are obliged to conform

to the expectations of their old community and their new community.

Contemporary rites of passage do not necessarily mark one as a member of the new group for the duration of one's life as traditional rites of passage often do. People can move fluidly between groups and leave groups which they feel no longer share their goal. This is another marker of a contemporary rite as traditional societies do not often allow members this option. Contemporary groups are more mobile and this may be part of the rationale for contemporary rites of passage; they enable people to become "fast friends" and move quickly into a sense of togetherness and ultimately develop a group dynamic and a group identity. Peter Narváez found this to be true in his examination of office send-off parties; contemporary people are transient, and therefore groups have a high turnover which requires some way to deal with members that are leaving or entering the group. Victor Turner was one of the first writers to examine contemporary rites of passage.

Victor Turner

Turner found that in contemporary rites of passage there were several shifts from the way traditional rites were practised. While traditional rituals are sacred, contemporary ones are profane; they are no longer articulated towards the rites supernatural or the spiritual, instead they are more psychological or psyche orientated. Turner found that contemporary rites of passage were no longer rituals, they were secularised performances. In connection with this, Turner's analysis of contemporary rites of passage focussed on "liminality," a term also used by van Gennep for the transition stage.

Turner's emphasis on the liminal stage of ritual, the "threshold" area of the rite, is essentially the main emphasis of the rite of passage that the students of St. Peter's University are undergoing. New students undergo various rites of separation. They all have different bonds (home community, religious, familial) and they are separated from those bonds in various ways. Although most students arrived on campus on a specific day to begin their orientation, they had different backgrounds, arrived from different areas and at different times within that day. Based on informal conversations the majority of the students were coming from rural areas with tradition based economies, such as animal husbandry, crop farming, fishing, and logging. The only common feature of their experience at this point is that they have all been separated from their home environments. Furthermore, they go on to do different things with their education, and even leave university at different times. Their differences outweigh their similarities, although they must come to function as a group. They learn to become a group member during the liminal stage or threshold stage that is therefore the main focus here.

Of the liminal stage in which one experiences transitory rites, van Gennep said "Transition rites may play an important part, for instance, in pregnancy, betrothal and initiation" (Rites 11). After Orientation Week, when the incorporation would normally occur in most rites, the student is incorporated into this temporary new group rather than reincorporated into their previous group. This is often true for any rite of passage, however, people undergoing other rites may have the opportunity to return to their home community after their rite. There is, too, most often a point when the student returns home (whether to visit or to live) and receives some level of incorporation, but this varies from person to person in terms of the ritual performed and the timing of this ritual. One

example of this type of ritual would be an elaborate meal with family when the student returns home. “Thus, although a complete scheme of rites theoretically includes preliminal rites (rites of separation), liminal rites (rites of transition), and postliminal rites (rites of incorporation), in specific instances these three types are not always equally important or equally elaborated” (Rites 11). It is arguable that the liminal stage in which students undergo the rites of transition may extend through their entire university experience.

Turner’s study of performance is also worthy of note here, as much of Orientation Week is a spectacle and takes the form of a show performed for the benefit of an audience. Turner associated liminality with performance, as is discussed in his work From Ritual to Performance. The “sacredness” of the ritual may no longer be as central to the rite, but the structure stays. Turner wrote:

In other words, if the contrivers of cultural performances, whether these are recognized as ‘individual authors,’ or whether they are representatives of a collective tradition, genuises (sic) or elders, “hold the mirror up to nature,” they do this with “magic mirrors” which make ugly or beautiful events or relationships which cannot be recognized as such in the continuous flow of quotidian life in which we are embedded. The mirrors themselves are not mechanical, but consist of reflecting consciousnesses and the products of such consciousnesses formed into vocabularies and rules, into metalinguistic grammars, by means of which new unprecedented performances may be generated. (Dramas 22)

The cultural performances at St. Peter’s are a mixture of performances which the residents consider traditional and those that are innovated in the framework of that tradition, often with outside influences such as those coming from popular culture or other sources, as discussed later in the chapter. It is plausible, then, that the performances of Orientation Week are a commentary on university life through the use of “mirrors.” Some of these mirrors may reflect undistorted realities but, as Turner found,

others may “make beautiful” or “ugly” that which they are reflecting, making it difficult to ascertain the meaning behind the performance due to coding.

In looking at performances of university rites of passage as contemporary rites of passage, several things come to light. For most students a university rite of passage will be their first group rite of passage based on age and sex. All participants are roughly the same age, and although men and women are present at many events, there is a heightened importance to same sex events. Unlike other rituals that the students may have been involved in through institutional religious beliefs or informal home community, in the university rite of passage the majority of people participating do not come from a common cultural background: instead people share common purpose. It is highly possible that with the exception of the institutional high school graduation or a religious rite, many students have never been the subject of a group rite of passage, and certainly have not participated in a group ritual which their peers created. As I mentioned above and discuss further early in Chapter Three, it is also noteworthy that St. Peter’s combines the institutional rite of passage with the informal rite of passage, and so, the students are also undergoing both rites at the same time.

Michael Robidoux

In his work on professional hockey players, Men at Play, Michael Robidoux initially looked at various approaches to rites of passage but finally disregarded van Gennep’s interpretive framework in favour of Turner’s. However, he found distinguishing acts or rituals as liminal or non-liminal equally problematic because putting a practice in either category implies a judgement on the behalf of the

ethnographer, since they imply that one act is normative and one is not (116). Who are we, as ethnographers, to decide what is normative and what is not? Robidoux encountered further problems, because although the hockey players with whom he was dealing do pass through initiation rites and are incorporated into the team, they are then in another “liminal” stage when one compares them to society at large.

This is comparable to stages in which the students I studied in residence found themselves. They experienced an extended liminality after their initial stage of the relatively quick initiation during Frosh Week. However, these students eventually graduate in four years and leave the liminality behind, whereas Robidoux’s hockey players are forced to live out their professional lives in this stage, becoming a fairly stratified subculture. There is a set time and ultimately some end to the liminality of the residence rites, and a self-affirmation of the time spent in residence as liminal. This minor difference allows me to use Turner’s interpretation of van Gennep with ease.

Robidoux’s study influenced me in other ways as well, as he works with a group of young men of the same relative age as the students in my study. Furthermore, he had previous experience with that type of group as he was a member of a hockey team years earlier and returned to a similar group to the one he had belonged to in his youth, much like I did.

Michael Taft

The idea of a cross between Robidoux’s Men at Play: a Working Understanding of Professional Hockey and Taft’s Inside these Greystone Walls: An Anecdotal History of the University of Saskatchewan provides the most accurate description of the lines this

study will follow. Like Taft's work, detailed information about one particular campus will be explored: among other things, Taft discussed song, dance, legends and calendar customs. Of students entering university, Taft stated "For many of them, this is their first major decision; becoming a member is a rite of passage from childhood and the security of the home to adulthood and the insecurity of a world of strangers" (17). Taft introduced the "village" (university community) and the "elders" (faculty and staff). He also discusses the interaction between the "village" and the town in which it is situated. Taft provided what he calls an "anecdotal history," one which is not necessarily historically accurate, but which is correct according to oral history. I have also followed some of Taft's approaches in that I have presented both historical facts and oral facts.

Within the context of any university, it is arguable that there are also ongoing rites, those that extend beyond the first week. In Behind these Greystone Walls, Michael Taft referred to the university as a village and the people within it as villagers and elders. If one were to follow through with this logic and identify the student as one who has moved to a new "village," it would seem logical that other rites may occur in this new village. This seems to be the case at St. Peter's where other various rites of passage take place during a student's university career, even to the extent that alumni appear to associate the university with rites of passage. Many alumni return to the university in order to be married there or have their wedding pictures taken there. Many people also return for events such as April 6th Day, as is discussed in Chapter Four.

Particular to Boddington is the term "Old Boys" which refers to former residents of the house who have lived in the house for many years and since graduated or left school. There is no similar term for women in the house, or for that matter, women of

other houses who have lived there for a long time, although it is often recognised with a gift or award at their house dinners. “Old Boys” may be a term associated with sports, as it is also in use by the university Rugby team to refer to former team members. The term “Old Boys” has been used for at least 10 years as noted by a graduate that began university in 1992 and found the term in usage at that time.

There was also a tradition called “Old Boys”. This was given to guys who had been in the house for their 4 years at STU. Most of the guys that did it while I was there were all good fellas. It didn’t mean anything really, just what the guys would call each other. By so doing it gave the guys a sense that they had survived, maybe accomplished something? There was no sort of mentoring program set up through this, although I do think that young guys who maybe wanted someone to talk to/advice would come to the one of the “old boys.” (J.D)

Campus Lore

My work also draws on campus lore, a subset of folklore similar to occupational folklore. Campus lore is a catch all term that is used to refer to university practices. Any genre could be represented on any campus, like legend or song. Legend and songs are not campus lore unto themselves, however, specific legends and songs are campus lore. Bronner has written about campus lore in his book Piled Higher and Deeper. Talking about his own experience learning campus lore as an undergraduate he wrote in his introduction:

I heard, for example, that a sculpture of Pegasus over the entrance to the Fine Arts Building would fly off if a virgin walked into the building. (The sculpture is still there.) From students on other campuses I heard of columns collapsing, clocks on towers stopping, and statues altering their poises in the event that a virgin should graduate.

I listened intently as word went around about a popular seer predicting a mass murder would take place at a college like mine. Funny how the story circulated around several campuses in the area just before Hallowe’en, along with stories of lover’s lane murders and roommates done in because they recklessly defied

warnings against going out into the scary night. (Bronner 12)

Bronner discussed campus lore at length, including legend (ghost stories, contemporary legend, legends to do with campus architecture), song, jokes and sayings, play and games. In discussing the value of this material, Bronner wrote:

This material is hardly frivolous, for it says much about the fears, joys, and values of America's college students – students who become the nation's professionals and leaders. Add to these stories and beliefs the special vocabulary peculiar to college students, and the customs, games, rituals, and songs college students seem alone to know, and you have the sense of an occupational culture preserved by the bounded settings of college campuses throughout the country. Being a student is a special experience – one that most readily leave behind after a few years, but one alumni look back on with nostalgia. (Bronner 12)

The value of the material in providing a window into the aspirations and attitudes or the “fears, joys, and values” of students cannot be overlooked and are often obvious through practices such as the “special vocabulary peculiar to college students, and the customs, games, rituals, and songs” which are specific to university or college campuses.

Bronner's book has helped me to understand a rough classification of the types of items associated with campuses. It seems that there is a need to study these legends or any element of folklore individually, by genre, as well as in combination with the other practices of the institution in order to better understand their functions and the importance of the practices to the folk groups. It is arguable that most campus lore is usually published in a popular format and provides little analysis, and is meant for either for promotional (e.g, John A. Adams; Topping; Utt) or entertainment purposes (e.g. Betterton; Carlinsky; Schaeper, Merrill, and Hutchison) rather than academic.

Campus lore's function is not often discussed, as most campus lore compilations are wide surveys of the customs of various campuses that provide little analysis. Often

campus writings are a nostalgic or historical look at a particular campus, usually commissioned by the university itself. They may concern specific sociological themes, such as A Path Not Strewn With Roses, which deals with the trials of women trying to find and maintain a place and a voice within the University of Toronto. Or they may be random collectanea by undergraduate students for introductory folklore classes.

Campus lore is also commonly used selectively. Campus urban legends, for example, appear in urban legend books, such as those by Jan Harold Brunvand (Mexican 201-202; Curses 275-317). This is not merely an academic leaning, as things like campus ghost legends are grouped with other ghost stories and given the same treatment when discussed in television shows and other popular accounts that are focussed on the supernatural. When grouping campus lore according to theme, these practices fail to be studied contextually with regard to their importance on that particular campus. For instance, it is acknowledged by Bronner that there is a body of legends that exist around physical irregularities of buildings on campuses. Subtitled “Miracles and follies,” these legends are historical ones about the reasons behind the architecture of buildings, and he finds that these are often linked to legends about architectural blunders (144-48). In my own research I found that St. Peter’s and Memorial University both seem to have similar legends. However, rather than dealing with architectural blunders, they often tie supernatural explanations to physical peculiarities of the campus that are perceived as abnormal. I discuss this further in Chapter Four. While comparison allows one to realise that these are common legends, it also does not reveal much about what these legends mean to the people at each institution.

Throughout the study I draw on several bodies of academic literature, such as

bawdy material, language and play, and popular culture, as they are represented in campus lore. These topics all are important to the understanding of the material I collected. Although these genres are often on the periphery of folklore studies they are main factors on campus.

Bawdy

A strange dichotomy seems to exist within bawdy lore: to study the bawdy lore of another culture is of academic interest, while to study our own is perverse. For example, we rarely study our own mating rituals. Vance Randolph's Ozark collections of the 1950s are still referred to in hushed tones due to academic criticism outside our discipline that prevented them from being published until the 1970s, although Roger Abraham's, Deep Down in the Jungle has bawdy content and was published in the 1960s. They are celebrated although perhaps somewhat alone in their field. In the discipline of folklore we do not have a history of bawdy lore studies or a history of theoretical bawdy lore literature as we do for such areas as ballads or folktales. Although bawdy material is often intrinsic to our research, in some ways it remains an emerging area, probably due in part because collections like Randolph's were relatively inaccessible for some time, and possibly because bawdy lore appears in the minor folklore genres. Rayna Green wrote that Randolph had problems in securing a publisher for his materials and this may have also had an effect on those contemplating research in that area. Although Randolph collected the items found in Pissing in the Snow in the 1950s, they were not published until 1975, although he did attempt to include them as part of earlier works. "The climate was not right at that time, however, for inclusion of bawdy material even in

scholarly books” (xi). It is unfortunate that bawdy lore collection is often attempted by the non-professional folklorist, quite often for quick monetary profit (for example, Johnson; Niles and Moore; Thomas).

There is also the inherent ability of bawdy lore to shock the collector and the reader, and to reflect negatively on the participant; as I discussed in Chapter One, this was one problem that Matt raised during our interviews. Within the context of this research it was difficult to record bawdiness in the student’s day to day life. Students censor themselves in front of outsiders, and possibly more so when one considers distancing factors such as age and sex that may influence the participants. I did not have this problem because I went into the students’ residence and was on their ground for the interviews, allowing them to be less censored. Also, because of the length of time I was there, any reservations that students may have initially had about talking openly in front of me seemed to be forgotten, and in fact I became less sensitive to language over time. I did not collect an exhaustive account of the uses of bawdy lore in Boddington, although I did make note of them in my field book when I encountered them. I also found that some examples came up during my interviews as the students were used to relating in such a way and did not see any problem with using turns of phrase that may be considered questionable by those outside of residence. The use of bawdy material was also closely linked with play and performance. For example, foul language was used when instructing first year students for the rituals and there were bawdy elements to their songs.

Play

Throughout the thesis I also draw on research on play, particularly work that explores gender and play. Several articles that explore gender and play within rites of passage have been particularly helpful. These include Tye and Power's work on bachelorette parties, Williams' on the bachelor party, and Lyman's article on fraternity jokes. A major theme to arise from all three articles, humiliation through play, is also instrumental to Orientation Week. All three articles also deal with sexuality and segregation based on sex for certain rituals.

Tye and Power found that the bachelorette parties were coded activities that were often in response to male activity, not simply historically because bachelor parties predate bachelorette parties, but because on a case by case basis, women tended to have stagette or bachelorette parties in response to a stag or bachelor party. As three of Tye and Power's participants said "If guys can do it, so can we," "Hey, we can do it too," and "I don't think I've ever heard of a woman just having a stagette party if the man wasn't" (554).

The men that live in Boddington also often practice activities that are afterwards replicated by the female houses. There is a historical pattern of this behaviour, often to the point that Boddington believes (and perhaps rightly so) that it started many of the campus rituals. It becomes a problem because the men construct a sexuality, often through song (as was discussed in Chapter One), that is largely filled with braggadocio. The women respond likewise through their song, although they trivialise their meanings by the use of the men's language and the men's model for many of their songs and events. If they do not use the men's model, they use those which are most familiar for

analogous female groups, usually cheerleaders or sorority girls as depicted stereotypically in popular film. This self-presentation is supported and perpetuated by the men, who as a group encourage the women in their risqué songs and actions. Essentially, for women in residence, there are usually two paths of representation: they can either embody the male stereotype or they can become stuck in the “virgin-whore” representation, a sexually charged yet unattainable woman, a “tease.” There are groups of women who try to break from this mould by using coding (as Tye and Power discussed) or by not adopting the traditional path of either, but either remaining outside the rituals or creating a hybrid of the two styles, as we will explore in Chapter Four. Tye and Power also discussed the elements of public performance that erupt during a bachelorette party that takes place in a public bar. Likewise, many of the residence activities take place in public areas in which the observers are part of the performance. Tye and Power’s research took place in Atlantic Canada, as did my research, and so one can see similarities in the treatment of gender in this region. They also considered the role of joking in the women’s stagette party, saying, “By adapting the male model of the bachelor party, the women take on, at least for the night, some of the bravado that goes along with it” (554). The stagette seems to create a sense of sexual freedom for the women who participate in it. The object is not the humiliation of the bride to be but rather a chance for all the participants to openly objectify themselves in a public setting with no fear of repercussions. This may be what women in residence are also in pursuit of.

The male stags, just as the male residence experience, seem to operate differently and have different functions. Williams used participant observation to accompany “strippers” on their bachelor party jobs. She found that bachelor parties followed a

different pattern from the other jobs at which the strippers performed, such as the “strip-o-grams.” Williams discovered that the future groom was feminised and humiliated quite overtly at these bachelor parties. He was dressed in the garments that the stripper discarded as she made gestures that suggested he was masturbating or impotent. Furthermore he was often trapped into no-win situations, in which she would motion for him to touch her while his friends encouraged him (or perhaps forced him) to, but when he did he was slapped by the dancer. The second act of these parties involved the stripping of the man in front of his friends by the stripper. Williams suggested that humiliation is key in these two events: moreover, it is important for the victim (the bachelor) to maintain a joking behaviour throughout this rite.

In his study of fraternity joking relationships, Lyman found that jokes were a major component of interaction between “guys and girls” (as both the students of his institution and St. Peter’s University refer to themselves). Lyman discussed a particular joke that was not received as planned: a joke that was thought inappropriate by the opposite sex. While play is integral to interaction among students, so are play “cues.” Play is also a means with which to segregate those that do not participate, and a means to humiliate those that do. Not all play is good play or welcome play. Through the first year students’ effort to be a “good sport,” a phrase that both Lyman and Williams used, they are subjected to many socially awkward situations and personal discomforts in the name of play. In order to facilitate their involvement the Frosh Leaders frequently tell them they are doing these activities in the name of tradition, although this is often admittedly a lie as we will explore in Chapter Three. There is recognition that those before them have performed these acts and therefore so must they in order to be

incorporated into the group. Not only do the new students need to learn the language and perform “traditional” acts of play, but they also need to learn the body of lore associated with the residence and the university campus.

Popular Culture Influences on the Campus

Popular depictions of university culture are often problematic: because of the age of the participants, popular culture influences them and plays an important part in the orientation and overall residence life, and possibly affects their perception of university life. University students use their resources to create things out of popular culture that are meaningful to them. These creations are then referred to as “bricolage.” Fiske states “In capitalist societies, bricolage is the means by which the subordinated make their own culture out of the resources of the ‘other.’ Madonna’s ‘look’ is a bricolage that enables her to make her meanings out of their resources and in which her fans can participate” (Fiske 150).

As Peter Narváez and Martin Laba (1986) identified, there is a continuum between popular culture and folk culture, and the students at St. Peter’s create their meanings out of popular culture, although popular culture sells their meanings back to them. Madonna did this by popularising folk culture, making meanings out of the resources of the subcultures of the folk. Fiske’s work was published in 1989, and this repackaging of the folk groups’ identity for mass marketing was especially true for the early image Madonna was depicting which reflected the gay club scene. Students at St. Peter’s University create a variety of meanings from popular culture. Primarily, elements of popular culture can be found in their songs and language as well as their material

culture. For example, the campus seemed to have a large number of material culture items that focussed on the television show Survivor during Frosh Week. They have taken phrases from the show and used them to embody their rituals, insinuating the show's phrases into the terminology that they used for Frosh Week. The two women's houses had Survivor phrases on their t-shirts. The Frosh Leaders of Sacred Heart used the phrase "The Frosh Leaders Have Spoken" (as opposed to Survivor's "The tribe has spoken") while the first year students wore shirts that said "No Immunity Will Be Granted." Accompanying the television show's logo on the Laurier women's shirts was the phrase "Outslide, Outchant, Outlast," (parodying the Survivor slogan "Outwit, Outplay, Outlast": Field notes 18). The Laurier house t-shirts were also done in the house colours, creating a bricolage of meaning between popular culture and house identity. There was also the "Tribal Council" mentorship program run by the Student Affairs Office during Frosh Week, using another Survivor term, and a contest parodying The Weakest Link in which the Director of Student Affairs, a one time Boddington Resident, dressed and acted as the mean game show host while asking questions about the campus. There are multiple uses of popular culture from old sitcoms, sports events, magazines, and so on. Sometimes the house uses these for group statements, as with the Boddington's Frosh Leader shirts, which picture Mr. T from the film Rocky III and the 1980s action series, The A-Team.

There are also times in which a combination of popular culture items are used to make statements by the individual about themselves in a publicly accepted manner and forum. Room decoration often reflects this, and many of the rooms I visited in Laurier, Sacred Heart and Boddington had been decorated with items that represented the house

such as old frosh t-shirts, as we will explore in Chapter Three. More interesting, though, was the way in which many of the residents had decorated their doors, walls, and even ceilings with combinations of images from popular culture.



Fig. 3 Boddington Hall Frosh Leader T-shirt (field photo).



Fig. 4 A decorated room in Boddington Hall (field photo).

Popular culture, while providing texts for students to manipulate and create their own meanings from, also has negative implications for university students. University is often a subject of popular magazines, texts, and films to which students may have access: such is the case Girls on the Verge, a popular book by undercover reporter Vendela Vida which includes a chapter on sorority “rushing” (3-40). Often the university students take things from these movies and texts and reconstruct them in order to provide their own meanings. At other times perceptions of university groups are harmed by the stereotypes presented in popular culture because either they are assumed to be that way by society at large, or, as a subculture, they uncritically reproduce what they see as part of their attempt to create meaning out of mass mediated culture.

In the past year there have been various university-focussed films: Road Trip, American Pie II, National Lampoon’s Van Wilder and Legally Blonde, among others. Typically they are “bittersweet” comedies whose main story line involves a romantic liaison between a young man and woman. In September 2001 a university residence situation comedy called Undeclared began airing on television. There are also university films of lasting influence like Animal House (1979), perhaps the father of all modern college comedies. Without putting too fine a point on it, the mass-mediated university comedies border on propaganda. These American comedies portray university as an ivy-covered institution of learning which is open to all. These types of movies and television shows depict huge residence rooms and ample facilities (such as in-residence gymnasiums). There are no cinderblock walled 10 by 12-foot rooms on the silver screen. These unrealistic comedies are what inform many students before they go to university themselves.

Of more concern than room size are many of the stereotypes that are often put forward within popular culture. The female student (often referred to as a “co-ed,” another problematic term) is overly sexualised within the narratives of university films. The most notorious of these stereotypes is the oft-depicted sorority girl in various stages of undress, who runs screaming helplessly when a man invades her residence, rather than doing something sensible, like calling campus security. The lack of clothing supplied to the actresses is unrealistic in the context of residence living. Nudity is acceptable if it is accidental, but it is never the norm. This social conditioning is so strong that during Frosh Week, after a particularly messy event, the shower curtains in Boddington were removed. Out of necessity, the first year students then showered together completely clothed (Field notes 63).

University men, in films, are often shown as the “nerd” who changes his moral character or physical appearance and gains extreme sexual prowess (like Anthony Edwards’ character in Revenge of the Nerds, or Tom Hulce’s in Animal House). Boddington even has an award for such changed behaviour that will be discussed in Chapter Four. There are other types of men in university movies, the most popular image being the “party animal” type who madly swills beer and copulates like a modern Bacchus (John Belushi in Animal House, or Rodney Dangerfield in Back to School). Athletes (Ted McGinley in Revenge of the Nerds), children of rich parents (Kevin Bacon in Animal House), and “freaks” (Tom Green in Road Trip) round out the picture.

Essentially, groups that are segregated by gender are highly sexualised as depicted in popular culture. We are more used to identifying this with women and female groups such as “co-eds” or sorority girls, nurses, cheerleaders, and private school girls, four

groups that are often caricatured in music videos and pornography. Similarly, though, there are groups of men who are sexual caricatured as young men “in their prime”: firemen, police officers, military men, hockey players, and so on. Residence men are “in their prime,” secluded from women and perceived as sexually deviant.

If there is any question about the importance of popular culture for these students, it is cited in some of the material from the Student Affairs office at St. Peter’s as one of the leading influences and sources of information for students. “First-year students at SPU will get advice from a variety of sources - profs, administrators, parents and the media” (Student Affairs Office, Tribal Council Manual). I found that popular culture was even used as a coping mechanism when two Boddington residents were talking to me about a much-loved janitor who had worked in house for a number of years. He died of a heart attack in the lounge of the building and was found by two students.

Sam: ... place bought in B-----, paid for, and they were just going to move up there when he retired, and it’s just like cop movies.

Jodi: Yeah.

Sam: As soon as you get your plan set for retirement.

Matt: It was just like cop movies. (Field recording 17, 28 Sept. 2001)

Clearly, to make such a leap in thought, or to use an example from popular culture in this instance, indicates a heavy reliance on it as a means of communication. The use of themes from popular culture instead of their lived experience implies that they feel they do not have the means to articulate the sentiment apart from employing a cultural referent. This is part of a language debate that will be dealt with in Chapter Four.

One of these two students also owned the film Dead Man on Campus (1998), a further indication that they are aware of the depiction of university in popular culture. I have found that in this age group it is common to use films or other items of popular

culture such as The Simpsons (which has a trivia contest in its honour during an end of the year ritual) as a reference point in order to easily communicate to each other without being at a loss for words (McDavid, "Simpsons"). During the April 6th festivities discussed in Chapter Four, one man held a lengthy dialogue based on sexual practices as revealed to him in Road Trip (2000), yet another university film (Field notes 130).

It is clear, based on the stereotypes expounded in popular culture and the manner in which they are reflective of and reflected in residence life, that a study of Boddington house requires a gender-focussed study. Although men and women sometimes live in the same residences there is more often than not a segregation of the sexes either physically, to one floor, or psychologically, through the use of negative terminology for the other group or through the use of gender biased games or activities. This will be discussed further in Chapter Four. In studying the gender issues of St. Peter's I draw on a feminist approach. Once again, Michael Robidoux's approach for his study of professional hockey players is of particular interest primarily because he provided a pro-feminist gendered approach to his study. He also dealt with a male group that has a certain correlation to Boddington house, the predominately male house where research was conducted. At least in Canada within this age group, "Hockey," like "university," is a defining term, a cultural indicator: otherwise analogous terms like "badminton" and "community college" are not culturally charged in reference to gender.

In conclusion, studies that deal with campus "issues" are more closely associated with sociology, education, administration or the campus as a work place, rather than folklore works that focus on the campus, its students, and their folklore. Subjects such as hazing are very topical, and the negative aspects of student behaviour are front-page

news, while the importance of belonging and group are blatantly disregarded. Student behaviour is regarded as incomprehensible and not even worthy of trying to comprehend. Students are marginalised because of the actions of the few and stereotyped due to movies and bad press. (For example, during the later stages of this thesis, in April 2002, it was reported that two University of Kentucky students were killed during a chase within a residence when they fell from an upper level window.)

However, whether or not we agree with the actions of residence students, we must agree that their behaviours have meaning and are worthy of study. Residence life is one of the few places where I have witnessed large numbers of young people take part in communal “folk” activities: actively carrying traditions, teaching others orally through repetition, and placing importance on song composition. Furthermore, these things are done by choice and not through coercion from an “adult” authority such as one finds in schools and summer camps. For these reasons a study of student life in residence is a valid area of research.

Drawing on theories of rites of passage, as well as the studies of rites of passage and campus lore outlined in this chapter, this thesis looks at two major events, “Frosh Week” and “April 6th Day” and their contributions to the overall rite of passage of the first year student. It also examines some of the particulars of the highly oral culture in which the students are involved. Chapter Five is a look at some questions which were raised during research and fieldwork, while Chapter Four is an ethnography of end of year rituals: Wing Wars, April 6th Day and the house dinner. Chapter Three is an ethnography of Frosh Week and the history, songs, and rituals that surround it.

CHAPTER THREE – “WE’RE DIRTY SONS OF BITCHES”: FROSH WEEK AS A RITE OF PASSAGE

In his important structuralist discussion of rites of passage, van Gennep wrote: “Our interest lies not in the particular rites but in their essential significance and their relative positions within the ceremonial wholes, that is, their order.” He adds the “underlying arrangement is always the same”; it is the pattern of the rites of passage” (quoted in Kimball xi-x). Following van Gennep’s now familiar argument that order is important in rites of passage events, I begin this chapter by tracing the events of the campus Orientation Week and Boddington’s Frosh Week chronologically, highlighting anything of significance in the day to day activities. Because of the wealth of information, I first describe the activities and then provide a more in-depth analysis later in the chapter.

As discussed in Chapter Two, the campus Orientation Week and the residence Frosh Week are both rites of passage. Van Gennep referred to “initiation” practices in The Rites of Passage; a term that is somewhat problematic when one is dealing with initiation that may take place at university. The negative connotations of the term “initiation” within popular culture and media (its association with “hazing” and alcohol) cause the university administration to prefer the term Orientation. For the purposes of consistency with the theoretical literature, I use the term initiation here, albeit selectively. However, I draw heavily on the two emic terms as well: “Orientation Week” for the week of “official” campus rites of initiation and “Frosh Week” for the week of residence rites of initiation. These are in common usage by the students and most members of the university community. For example, the T-shirts for the campus read “Orientation 2001”

while those for Boddington house read “Frosh 2001.” These are insider terms.

I will look at St. Peter’s University generally and at Boddington Hall specifically in an attempt to present all the activities a first year Boddington student would be involved in as both a member of the university and a member of the residence. Throughout this chapter the terms “first year students” and “Frosh” may be used interchangeably. The focus here is on residence life rather than that of off-campus students, and based on the residence orientations associated with Boddington Hall rather than those of the other three residences which will be mentioned only when it is appropriate. When Campus Orientation events are mentioned, they will also be identified as such to avoid confusion. Campus Orientation is essentially that which is run by the university rather than the residences: it is open to all students, not just those who live in residence.

Pre-existing Groups

Approximately 2,400 fulltime students attend St. Peter’s University, with the student body divided 70/30 women to men (Office of University Advancement, “New Century”). Twenty seven percent of the students live in the four residences, giving them and occupancy of about 700 students. Of this, 480 live in the three on campus residences, Boddington and Laurier with about the same amount and Sacred Heart significantly less. Another 220 live in the off-campus residence Weaver Hall (Office of University Advancement, “2001-2002 Leaders in Liberal Arts” booklet).

As was mentioned in the introduction, I began my fieldwork research by introducing myself to the pre-existing groups in residence. With the help of the Director

of Student Affairs I met the Orientation Committee, the House Committees and Frosh Committees as well as the Proctors. Orientation events at St. Peter's University are organised by the Orientation Committee, composed of several members and an executive elected the previous year. The head of this committee is the Orientation Chair. Residence events are the responsibility of individual House Committees and Frosh Committees. The House Committee plans various events throughout the year: they organise a number of parties, such as Wing Wars and the April 6th Day events, discussed in Chapter Four, and they decide which charities the house will support, as well as how to spend house funds. The Frosh Committee was composed of twenty-one Frosh Leaders who functioned as instructors for the first year students in the new modes of behaviour that they must learn. The Frosh Leaders are present at all the Boddington house Frosh events that the first year students participate in. They plan and purchase that which is needed in order to execute Frosh Week. For example, the Boddington house Frosh Committee purchased (with the help of house funds) t-shirts for the first year students, subsequently sold at a mark-up, and food for two events discussed later in the chapter.

In Boddington, committee memberships overlap: many people are on both the House Committee and the Frosh Committee. The Frosh Committee is informally constituted and begins with the elected position of Frosh Leader. The Frosh Leader then forms the Frosh Committee, all members of which are referred to as Frosh Leaders. The head Frosh Leader usually has a member of the Frosh Committee on whom they place more responsibilities than the others. The two people seem to mutually run Frosh Week although one is in the formally elected position. Although this key assistant was never formally decided upon or stated, in 2001 his existence in Boddington was obvious (see

Leemon 33). This was further complicated in Boddington because the person who had been elected Frosh Leader for 2001 did not return. Instead, two people who were on the house committee, the President and the Treasurer, who are also friends, were jointly responsible for Frosh Week. The Treasurer, "Matt," took more responsibility for some of the areas of Frosh Week than the President, "Sam," probably because the presidential duties may have conflicted with these events. Having people on both the House Committee and the Frosh Committee is common on St. Peter's campus, not just within the Boddington residence. In Boddington, these two were largely in charge of Frosh Week, deciding on the events and determining their times and dates. They were seldom questioned or challenged, either by their committee or by the first year students.

The final group contributing to Orientation Week / Frosh Week is the Proctors. Proctors are hired by the Student Affairs office and supervised by the Director of Student Affairs and a manager. A portion of their room and board is paid in return for their work. Their role is advisory, even though that usually means pointing the person in the direction of a professional). They also work a few evenings a month doing patrols of the hallways to keep the residences quiet and safe. Training processes begin for Proctors in mid-February. During Orientation Week / Frosh Week, Proctors perform tasks as per their mandate: they provide counselling services, do rounds of the house to check its security, and so on. Beyond this, they monitor events. Over the course of Orientation Week / Frosh Week (and Wing Wars, discussed in Chapter Four) the Proctors observe the events that are occurring. Their presence is a key part of their position. However, they are unobtrusive and attempt to allow the Frosh and Frosh Leaders a great amount of leeway. They are members of the house and so their participation (by observation) is not even

remarked upon.

St. Peter's gears up for Orientation Week and the new school year with nominations to the campus Orientation Committees and the residence Frosh Committees, and, to a lesser extent, the hiring of the Proctors. Most of this occurs in April of the previous school year. In September, before the incoming students arrive, the eight Residence Committees (each of the four houses each with a House Committee and a Frosh Committee) the campus Orientation Committee, and the Proctors participate in information sessions and training seminars. They begin to personalise and clarify the residences with nametags on the doors and rules and signs posted throughout the residence. This naming and decoration of residence is both a visual teaching tool and helps establish ideas of space and place within residence.

The main function of the student-run campus Orientation Committee is to organise campus events that are for all new students at St. Peter's. The Orientation Committee sells a package that must be purchased in order to participate in the activities. The contents of the pack vary from year to year, but usually include a T-shirt or some identifying article of clothing such as a beanie or a bandanna. The cost of the pack this year was \$65, and it included a T-shirt, a wall-sized wipe off memo poster/calendar and a door size one with marker, a travel coffee mug, playing cards, a clipboard, a laundry bag, a rape whistle key chain, and a selection of coupons and informative leaflets. Although the kits may be purchased and the events may be attended by all students, often off-campus students do not participate, especially in those events that occur during the evening. This was easy to observe one evening as residence students were engaged in "chant offs" using house songs which off-campus students could not take part in. "Chant

off” is the term that the people who live in residence use to describe a singing competition (Boddington Hall House Committee “Wing Wars Schedule”).

A few off-campus students showed up but remained on the outskirts of the group. There is a certain distinction made by university students in residence at St. Peter’s between themselves and students who live at home while attending university. In the very least, students who live in residence seem to associate with other people who live in residence as the majority of their peer group. The theory that there are differentiations made between those who live in residence and those who live off-campus is supported by Thomas Murray’s work on a Midwestern American campus. Murray found that students living in fraternity and sorority houses actually significantly changed their speech in an effort to sound different from those who did not live there (169). Not only is residence a means of separating those who do live there from those who do not, it is an indicator by which students may be judged by other students.

Although the Orientation Committee of the campus makes an effort to be inclusive, it is not always entirely successful. This is due in part to the fact that unlike off-campus students, residence students meet a large number of people during the course of the week. From early in the week, residence students start to comprise an identifiable group to others and each other through their house clothing and through participating in rituals such as song whenever they get in a group. Although the students are supposed to wear their Orientation t-shirts and not their Frosh t-shirts for Orientation events, they still arrive together and can identify other house members. They at least have a roommate or a next door neighbour they can attend events with, and often a whole wing goes together to events. The off-campus student who lives in an apartment or at home, on the other

hand, would have to arrive more or less alone, or perhaps with one friend, and is therefore less likely to do so. The university runs and funds these events which are meant for all incoming students, but at St. Peter's it is questionable how many people living outside of the residence community actually attend them. The first year students of the residences form a more cohesive group even early on, and this may be discouraging for those students who live off campus and have neither a peer group to attend the events with nor pressure from a group to take part in events.

Orientation events consist of learning the official university song, hearing guest speakers, attending a mass in the chapel, a live music night, and so forth. (Appendix II has a schedule of the week's events, many of which will be discussed further in this chapter.) The Orientation Committee usually organises the type of events that one would associate with high school Winter Carnivals or dances; although more money is spent, and events may be geared towards an older audience, for the most part the goals are similar. The university hopes first year students will gain a certain amount of familiarity with each other and the campus during these events. For the first two days the campus Orientation Leaders sell the Orientation kits and give campus tours that begin from the centre of campus. Above all, events are "safe:" the Orientation Committee's activities are usually held either during the day (before supper) or in the early evening. Major parts of the frosh activities happen immediately before supper. Going to supper together – usually called going to something "as a house" – is important during Frosh Week. As a consequence, the Boddington community is reformed and made identifiable immediately after the more democratic and pluralistic Orientation activity. In 2001, there were three exceptions to this: a late night at a local bowling alley and games centre; a Video Dance;

and the aforementioned music night. Essentially, the Orientation Committee and Frosh Committees act in tandem, but with the introduction of a third group, the University and its academic interests, the residences' Frosh Committees usually bow out. There is not typically any animosity in doing so, as both the Orientation Committee and the Frosh Committee respect each other's jobs, yet see that they are different.

History of Initiation at St. Peter's

Initiation, either as "Orientation" or "Froshing," has a long history at St. Peter's, although it is unclear how long it has used these names. When dealing with the history of Orientation and Frosh Week, I cannot separate the two due to the fact that this terminology does not seem to exist before the move of the university in 1960s; when these terms are used, they are used interchangeably in the literature.

Prior to the 1960s accounts of events in campus history books, student newspapers and yearbooks, do not follow use current terminology that distinguishes between "Orientation" and "Froshing." Regardless of the fact that one cannot exactly determine what was practised when, one can find certain similarities to events of the past and events as found during the Orientation Week and Frosh Week of 2001. I have been able to establish longevity of current themes of Orientation Week and Frosh Week at St. Peter's University. For example, the official university song taught in 2001 dates back to at least 1911:

2001 What's two plus two?
 Four it's a hikety jikety, a hikety jikety,
 A soloma soloma roo,
 A rickety rackety rickety rackety S.P.U.

Cheree, cherah, cher-rah-rah-rah,
St. Peter, St. Peter, Hurrah!

1911 Hi ca de chik, Hi ca de chik
Halumun, talumun gee
Riggidy, raggady, riggidy raggady S.P.C.
Gee hee gee ho, Gee ha ha ha
St. Peter, St. Peter, Rah, Rah, Rah. (Fraser 42)

Campus papers and yearbooks carry articles about first year students undergoing various rituals (St. Peter's University Student Union, 1954 St. Peter's Yearbook). Some of these rituals are still a part of the current rites at St. Peter's. Archival research conducted while at St. Peter's uncovered articles of male students with inversion of usual dress in (SPSN 31 Oct. 1946), which is still commonplace in 2001. However it is not clear whether, at the time they were practised, they were considered part of a campus event or a residence event.

Still other historical commonalities can be found. A list of rules from 1960, which appeared in a 1964 book about the history of the university, bears remarkable thematic similarities to rules of Frosh Week as practised in 2001. It is possible that female initiation took place at this time, however, there were not facilities for women to board at the university campus before the move in 1964. It seems that there were a number of women in attendance in 1960, the time to which this list is dated, but its language indicates that it is rules for men. It is also possible that female initiation occurred, but was considered less important at the time the book was compiled. More probable is that since the book was a historical account of the university and not its student body, one example was thought to suffice as representational. The rules were one of the few pieces of student culture published in a campus history book:

1. Every Freshman must address every upper classman as SIR.
2. He must carry matches at all times, should it happen an upper classman asks for a light.
3. Frosh must open doors and carry books for the upper classmen.
4. Frosh will be expected to butt cigarettes for the upper classmen.
5. In the refectory the freshmen must stand at the end of the line.
6. Frosh must always wear their name cards (Fraser 92).

Printed lists of rules for first year students were also available in 2001, a practice that is today followed more by the female houses than the male houses, because the male houses follow a largely oral format for their rules as well as a certain amount of ambiguity. A written list of rules cannot easily be added to. However, an oral listing of rules as the situations arise can give the returning student more power. One such list of rules appeared on a hand painted 3' x 6' banner in Laurier Hall's lounge during Frosh Week, 2001.

Laurier Hall Frosh Week Rules, 2001

1. No shaving.
2. No makeup
3. No hair doing.
4. Keep shower caps on at all times.
5. Always wear shirts. Do not wash T-shirts.
6. When you hear the whistle say "We love you frosh leaders"
7. Be afraid.

Again, there are similarities: both sets of rules are about the same length, they both involve things that the first year student must wear in order to show their status, and they both indicate that the first year student must use certain phrases such as "Sir" or "We love you frosh leaders" in order to show respect to the older students.

As indicated in Chapter One, there were only male students pre- 1938 and the students were housed in three multipurpose buildings. Therefore, any initiation activities before the 1964 move would essentially be campus-wide. The university was much

smaller and this would have doubtless had an impact. That said, those who lived at the university as boarders would have probably received more Froshing than those students who lived at home and attended university, simply as a matter of opportunity. This all-male environment and small campus is problematic in pinpointing what events were campus wide (like Orientation Week) and what events were affiliated with residence life (like Frosh Week).

Boddington's rules are less formally recorded, but similar to those of Laurier and the 1960 rules presented above. The ambiguity of their rules means that new rules can be introduced at anytime. Most of these new rules are "situational," as a 2001 Frosh Leader indicated about the cafeteria, while in the cafeteria, "Anyone older than you gets in front of you" (Field notes 22). Of course, Boddington Hall Frosh Leaders must also be treated with respect in actions and when directly addressed (it is preferable for first year students to not address a Frosh Leader directly during Frosh Week). The implication in Boddington is that there are no written rules to allow flexibility in the course of Frosh Week. Rules can then be constructed in an impromptu manner whenever necessary. These are often now not phrased as a "must do," but instead in a way that allows the first year students to "volunteer" to do activities. Volunteering during Frosh Week is a key to fitting in within the house. When one volunteers to do something unpleasant in order to spare one's housemates, one has performed a self-sacrificial act that is rewarded because of its adherence to the ideals of community living. A full description of volunteering is found later in the chapter.

Rules are one important continuing element in Frosh Week, dating to at least 1960. Other codes for behaviour exist although they may not be written down as rules.

Rule 6 from Fraser says that “Frosh must always wear their name cards:” this is still practised by Sacred Heart House where each girl receives a baby bib with her name on it which she must wear for the duration of Frosh Week. In 2001, Boddington Frosh often had nicknames written on their Frosh t-shirts in permanent marker by the Frosh Leaders.



Fig. 5 Pierce’s Ho’s [whore] modified and customised Frosh T-shirt. Students were made to cover the word “Ho” with duct tape after the Director of Student Affairs learned what was going on (field photo).

There are also regulations of dress: each first year student in each house must purchase and wear a Frosh t-shirt that becomes their uniform for the entire week. In Boddington the t-shirt must not be washed except on the Frosh’s body and cannot be dried except by hanging. The Frosh Leaders’ exhibition of control over the Frosh’s clothing is shown by Fraser’s rule 6, but also by such elements as the inversion of dress as mentioned earlier in the 1954 yearbook.

Practices such as the “elephant walk,” a manner of walking employed by Boddington only during Frosh Week and only by first year students today, is found in yearbooks dating back to the 1920s, and it is possible the practice dates back further. The elephant walk is executed by each person becoming an “elephant.” In order to do this they face forward and place one hand so that it sticks out backward between their legs like a tail.

They extend their other hand forward like a trunk to grab the “tail” in front of them. The function of the elephant walk will be discussed later in the chapter.



Fig. 6 Elephant walk (field photo).

Finally, Black Sunday, the last event of Frosh Week, is a threat used throughout Frosh Week, because it is supposed to punish those who have not participated during the week. A retributive ritual on the last day of Frosh Week has been in existence since at least the 1940s, when it was called the Mock Trial and, later, the Kangaroo Court (SPSN 31 Oct. 1946 and 16 Oct. 1961). Although it may not have always borne the same name, the newspaper and yearbook accounts of the last day of Frosh Week certainly show similarities to what I found on the last day of Frosh Week in 2001. Black Sunday is a rite of incorporation and as such it will be discussed later in the chapter.

The survival and mutation of customs such as the school song, the “elephant walk,” and “Black Sunday,” made me increasingly curious about the derivation of the other customs. Since St. Peter’s began as a male school, and Boddington is the oldest residence and was the only male house on campus, it seems highly probable that they have been very important in maintaining traditions on campus. Another important factor for the maintenance of traditions at St. Peter’s University may be the movement of the university in 1964. Dégh and others have shown that movement, especially traumatic movement such as that associated with resettlement, is often an impetus to focus on the past and past traditions. Dégh wrote, “The old tradition was not interrupted by emigration but continued to develop along new paths. This is the second source of the Szeklers’ historic consciousness – the feeling of being torn away from their moorings, the isolation which strengthened the ethnic consciousness” (38). There is also the possibility that the nearby university has had some influence on St. Peter’s University, or that they have had some affect on each other. This is definitely the case in winter carnival and hockey; the two schools use at least one of the same chants, and follow the same calendar year, not through choice but through participation in the same hockey league. These are traditions that are campus wide at the neighbouring university: traditions that are associated with particular houses do not seem to be emulated. A residence at the neighbouring university has a logo that includes a cartoon lizard as a sort of mascot for the house. Although Boddington sometimes depicts a “Raider” (the pirate logo of the NFL’s Oakland Raiders) on its clothing or advertisements, it is not really a mascot. Several residences at the other university take part in the “Great Pumpkin Sacrifice,” a fall rite that involves the heaving of a flaming pumpkin from a university building. There

are numerous other examples of rites which are not found at both schools, and few examples of rites which are found at both schools, although, as previously mentioned, university rites all seem to follow certain themes.

Frosh Week: September 2nd to 9th, 2001

In order to attempt any kind of analysis, one must first identify the traditions. By drawing on van Gennep, I can begin to provide a very basic framework for Frosh Week. During Frosh Week, first year students are, for the most part, in a liminal or transitory state. Van Gennep found that “Transition rites may play an important part, for instance, in pregnancy, betrothal and initiation...” (Rites 11). Van Gennep also called rites in which a large group of people participates at the same time a “rite of intensification.” Even outside of Frosh Week activities, academically students experience liminality for an average of four years of classes until they become graduates. Students may also be part of many different rites of passage at the same time: the aforementioned Orientation Week and Frosh Week rites, which are different from each other, and academic rites. There are many other social subgroups in which the student may be involved, and each group has its own rites.

For example, a student at St. Peter’s may be a part of the Rugby team, live in residence, and be involved in the thriving campus theatre. A student with this level of involvement would be going through at least four rites of passage during their four-year university career. They would be initiated by the Rugby team, undergo residence Frosh Week, learn the body of lore that accompanies the theatre and partake in the university’s rites. Although the focus of my work is on residence rites, it should be borne in mind

that these other rites may be going on as well.

As mentioned earlier, van Gennep identified three stages in rites of passage, separation, transition and incorporation. Of these three, the second stage, transition, often called the “threshold” stage or the time in which one is in a “liminal” state, is what is most associated with initiation. During the 2001 Frosh Week at Boddington house, I certainly found this to be true. Frosh Week lasts more or less seven days and nights, although it is not completely compartmentalised, as there is some overlap between it and the first days of classes. There is a day of incorporation at the end of this week, and a day of separation at the beginning of it. The movement to a new area and a new status can be difficult: as van Gennep noted, “Such changes of condition do not occur without disturbing the life of the society and the individual, and it is the function of rites of passage to reduce their harmful effects. That such changes are regarded as real and important is demonstrated by the recurrence of rites, in important ceremonies among widely differing peoples” (Rites 12). The rites of passage as found during Frosh Week function as a coping mechanism for both the residents who are returning to the house and the incoming students.

The week begins with a separation from parents, although as previously mentioned the rite around separation varies from person to person; for instance, those from out of province may arrive by plane and have had parental separation previous to arriving at the university. Separation, for those who are moving away from home to attend university, is marked by high school graduation, some form of packing for university, and some form of travel. This is all that can be said conclusively for all the various university students: although one could give specific examples, they would not be

reflective of the whole group. Separation is also made obvious when the students arrive at the university and everything is antithetical to the family home and community in which they resided. There is a general attitude of carnival on campus. Huge groups mill around in the open areas, music blares from residence windows, and food is served in various areas at various times. Drugs and alcohol are often around, although drugs are prohibited on campus and Orientation Week is supposed to be alcohol free.

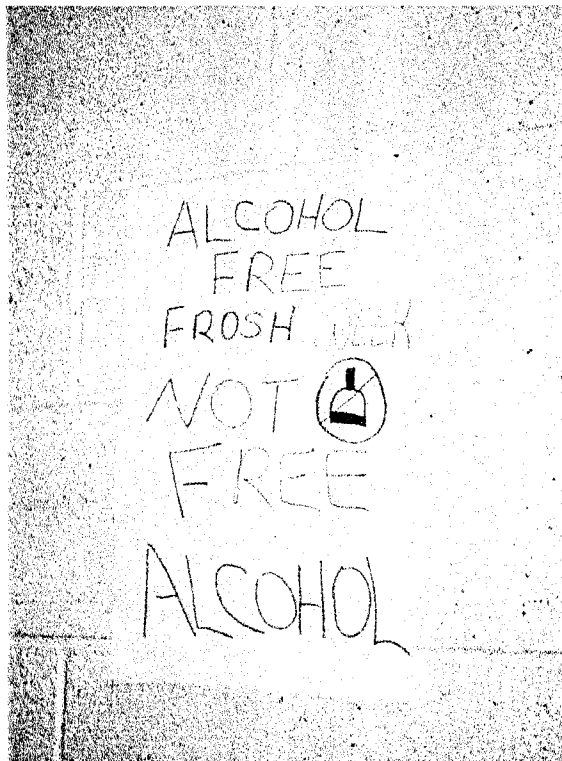


Fig. 7 Poster in Boddington Hall (field photo).

Returning students help Frosh move their things in, initiate friendships, and discuss rules for Frosh Week and rules for residence. Information packets from the various committees are made available. This initial separation stage from family, the familial home and the home community is very short in some ways. However, there are other forms of separation that take place during Frosh Week, the main one of which is

separation from other houses or residences.

The largest stage of Frosh Week is van Gennep's "transitional stage" which is characterised by liminality: the person who is going through the rite no longer has the status of their former group, yet they have not been accepted into their new group. This is the case of the first year student. They become a "Frosh" from the moment they step on campus until the Sunday of the first week. This name is then abandoned and they are a member of the house just as everyone else who lives there.

Day 1A and B: Sunday and Monday

Technically, new residence students may arrive on the Sunday before Labour Day, although they are discouraged from doing so. The day is mainly reserved for out of province students or those who must drive long distances. By this point, the residence student staff (Residence Co-ordinators and Proctors) as well as House Committees and Frosh Committees and the Orientation Committee (campus orientation) have already been on campus for several days in preparation, taking part in meetings and workshops.

In 2001, by the afternoon of September 3, the majority of the first year students arrived. The only exception to this was the odd person who attempted to miss Orientation Week and Frosh Week or those who had yet to arrive due to transit problems. With few exceptions, the activities of the first two days of the 2001 Frosh Week, September 2nd and 3rd, followed each other closely. September 2nd was merely a "holding pattern" for the 3rd, and hence I group them together here.

Where the Frosh Committee is stationed is also important. Each year its location is the same as the Proctors so that the new residents can get their keys and room

information and then be welcomed by the Committees. Laurier Hall stations their Committee with the Proctors in the first floor lounge that one must walk through in order to enter the building. Sacred Heart House is essentially an “E” shape, the middle section is class rooms and the top and bottom of the “E” are two-story wings which house the women. Proctors are positioned in the centre of the building, which is an equal distance from both wings, but which is not generally used throughout the year by the residents. Sacred Heart is small enough that the Committee knows as people arrive, and members of the Committee wander around the house to talk to the new residents. Boddington’s Proctors are set up in the hallway of the first floor, near the main entrance, which used to be a lounge but has since become a wheelchair accessible residence room. However, Boddington sets up its Frosh Committee area in the House President’s room on the third floor, where first year students go to get their Frosh t-shirts.

In 2001, typically a Boddington student arrived with parents, parked the family car, and got their room keys from the Proctor (this may have required some proof of payment from the financial office). House Frosh Leaders then often went to the person’s car and helped them carry things into the house. This generally made a good impression on the parents but also allowed the older residents a chance to get to know the new person and their possessions. One student may have a guitar, another a VCR. These things will later facilitate ties within the house. Not long after they arrived incoming students were encouraged to buy their t-shirt from the President’s room, thereby becoming somewhat familiar with the House President and the house itself. Later a meeting occurred outside where they learned their first song, the one which the residents use to announce themselves upon entering contested space, “We Are the Boddington

Raiders.”³

We Are the Boddington Raiders (Field recording 3, 3 Sept. 2001)⁴

We are the Boddington Raiders,
The Raiders of the night,
We're dirty sons of bitches,
We'd rather shag than fight.

Songs were always taught through repetition, and in the course of Frosh Week the first year students in Boddington were required to learn four songs. They began to realise that learning through repetition is important, and that they were expected to retain this information. Many students were obviously scared during this first day, exhibiting perspiration and nervous laughter. Later in the week, before the Condiment Slide (and after the end of the campus Orientation Week), “shag” was changed to “fuck” (Field recording 6, 8 Sept. 2001).

There was an obvious expectation that some students were not going to make it through the first week. Boddington Hall and Laurier Hall both had rooms made up with additional beds. These rooms are usually study rooms or lounges with doors that can be closed (although rarely locked). The implication here is that these people are on a wait list and that their living situation is very temporary. They will soon be moved into a room because someone will have decided to go home within the first few days. Whether people leave because of Frosh Week, academics or finances is another issue.

³ There were numerous instances of slang in common usage at Boddington Hall during 2001-2002: see Appendix V. There were some terms which were particular to the house, such as “Raiders” and “Raiders of the Night,” which is what the people of Boddington house refer to themselves as. The name may have a connection to panty raids, as was suggested by Matt and Sam, or the Raiders of the NFL whose logo Boddington has incorporated. Matt and Sam suggest that this may seem like the obvious connection to many people but it is unfounded. My feeling is that perhaps it is linked to the panty raid idea. Boddington has a tradition of “raids”: a St. Peter’s student newspaper from 1980 depicts a Boddington “Raider” who has

Although the Leaders follow the traditions of the house, they are not particularly organised: there is no need to be. The beauty of the situation is that the tradition bearers have been exposed to Frosh Week as first year students and basically recreate that experience for the next students. Often people have Frosh Leader positions for a number of years. In this way the orientation process is continually changing because what one year's Leaders may decide not to pass on to the new students causes each year to be unique in some way. Further, what each member brings to the group in terms of previous folk groups can be different and can have an effect on the body of lore adopted by the residence. Because the tradition is also highly group orientated and Leaders discuss things on a consensus basis, there is a large degree of creativity within the structure. For example, certain houses perform certain songs, but the gestures that accompany the songs may differ in accordance to the aesthetic of the Frosh Leaders for that given year. Songs are a good example of the rites of separation that exist between the houses. Each house has its own identity, the most obvious being its different "uniform" as depicted in the Frosh and Frosh Leader t-shirts which are usually in the house colours, and the songs. Songs not only mark separateness, they are also a way in which to stage battles between the houses in events called "Chant offs" which are chanting competitions.

Chant off

On the evening of September 3rd there was an Orientation Week event. The students were kept in a local entertainment centre with bowling and other games as part

captured teddy bears from Laurier and is holding them captive (SPSN 30 Jan. 1980).

of the alcohol free Orientation Week. It was a situation very similar to the high school “safe grad.” This event had been planned for and was detailed in the information that the students got in their Orientation kits along with their SPU Orientation t-shirts. Unlike residence orientation, campus Orientation is highly planned and the “first years” were well aware of the upcoming events. The event was open to all first year students, but less than ten from off-campus showed up for the event, and these few were obvious because they were not affiliated with any residence. The gathering for this event quickly escalated into an unplanned “chant off.”

The chant off was inspired in part by Weaver Hall residents arriving on campus. They walked from their residence, which is about ten minutes away from campus. Weaver Hall is a recently acquired building that was previously a hotel. It has several problems in the way it functions as a house: it is divided into three types of living spaces, with each type separated from the others. One must maintain a higher average to live in Weaver Hall than in the other residences, thereby reducing the number of returning tradition bearers. Weaver Hall is located off-campus, a further challenge, and it is a new house, so it does not have many of its own traditions, and those that it does have are no more than three years old, and often regarded as traditions that are “owned” by other houses. Because the house is relatively new and houses both women and men, a few people who have previously lived in other houses live or have lived in Weaver. Questions of ownership arise because the student cannot continue their traditions when they move to a new house. Those traditions belong to the originating house, not the

⁴ See Appendix III: Boddington Songs for annotation.

house member. An example of displeasure for other houses that do this is discussed in Chapter Four regarding April 6th Day. In some ways, both Weaver Hall and Sacred Heart House are on the periphery, although for different reasons.

In its favour, Weaver Hall is now the largest house at SPU. This works to its advantage in chant offs. On this particular night Weaver also had surprise on its side, as its chants were new and of a different style. The Frosh Leaders of other houses were not used to them. Furthermore, many of the new students were not aware that Weaver Hall existed because of its off-campus location.

The chant off had a definite structure: one group chanted and the next group replied to that chant. There was a desire to win the chant off, although it was not totally clear how one won. It was explained to me by Frosh Leaders from Laurier that the last group to still be chanting wins, but in practice this turned out not necessarily to be true. The last group to stop chanting is often allowed to win when other houses give up, good-naturedly walking away in the face of probable defeat. There are, however, other indicators of winning. There were other contributing factors that may have helped Weaver's win, such as new cheers, continual chanting, the number of people and the volume of the chants. The houses arranged themselves in phalanx or squares, if one can imagine the arrangement of early infantry, wherein a box was formed by the soldiers and an aerial view would clearly show that a square had been formed by lines of people standing shoulder to shoulder. Of particular interest this night was that the Boddington square hit and divided the Weaver square.

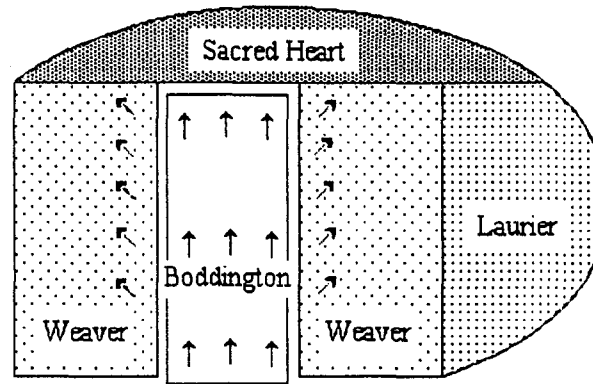


Fig. 8 Diagram of Chant-off.

During the chant off the Laurier square was flanking Weaver and the Sacred Heart square was almost hidden behind Weaver. The motivation for this type of division is that the group could no longer communicate well within itself and they no longer had unified chants.

Chant offs occur quite often throughout Frosh Week, but this particular evening was not necessarily the best example: although it occurred naturally when the groups came together to wait for an event, it was a bizarre mix of house Froshing and campus Orientation. As such, it ended when the campus Orientation Committee taught the groups the school chant, so there was no real winner. The chant off then also had a very structured end as it was finished when the busses arrived to bring the students to the entertainment complex. Another chant off occurred the next morning.

Day 2: Tuesday – Punishment

The events of the residence Froshing fell during the early hours of the morning, the late afternoon and the late evening. Early afternoon and early evening seemed to be reserved for the campus Orientation activities. I was told that occasionally things differ

from this pattern, but usually due to the availability of space at certain times, or conflicts with the Orientation activities scheduled. As Frosh Week and the first days of classes begin to overlap, one finds that fewer and fewer activities are scheduled during the day. During the second day I met with various Frosh Leaders to learn of their plans for the evening. I spent a good portion of each day during Frosh Week talking to Frosh Leaders in each house and finding out what the events scheduled for each day were. The Leaders of each house also interacted with each other on an informal basis to organise different activities or to avoid conflict of events, although this all occurred unbeknownst to the first year students. One example of this is the “night visit” when one house goes to wake up the other house. The second house, however, has already been woken up although they are still within their building, because their Frosh Leaders are aware of what is to come due to a call or a brief conversation in the cafeteria that afternoon with their members opposite. This is necessary as well because of the fact that the Frosh look to their Leaders for guidance. If one house’s Leaders went out for an evening and they were called on by the other house’s Leaders and Frosh, utter chaos would ensue.

On the morning of this second day I witnessed a “night visit” from Boddington to Laurier. From my position on the roof of the central building I walked quickly between the Boddington side and the Laurier side. This is a flat roof over the kitchen area of the cafeteria and surrounding the church. It a common area on campus and many people use this space to sunbathe during the warmer months. My notes indicate, “At 5:30 a.m. the room light of the Boddington house president comes on” (Field notes 49). As mentioned earlier, in Boddington, the House President is also involved in the Frosh Committee, one of two that lead it. My field notes continue:

Another light comes on, on the same floor. At 5:42 a.m. various lights are on and I hear the click of a loudspeaker through the open windows. There are frosh leaders on each floor and they begin to work their way across the floor, making themselves heard through the use of whistles and loudspeakers, shouting; 'Get the fuck up,' 'Get the fuck outta bed,' 'Come on frosh,' 'Get outta bed.' At 5:44 a.m. the first frosh students wander outside. Then they are told 'Go wake up the rest of the frosh. NOW!' This is obviously a time wasting tactic, as more people come outside they are sent back in. At 5:53 a.m. they line up in the military fashion that one has come to expect (Field notes 49).

This event resulted in a chant off situation that ended at 6:48 a.m. Boddington later received "Punishment" for losing the chant off, although it is probable that it would have occurred anyway, possibly as punishment for not getting up fast enough or for talking back.

"Punishment" as a label for an activity was used only once during Frosh Week. There were various other times that students were required to perform tasks as a result of their behaviour, but they were not seen the same way. The Punishment activity was discussed somewhat threateningly before it occurred, leading the first year students to suspect that something ominous was going to occur. I believe that Punishment would have happened to the Frosh regardless of their behaviour; in fact, although they were being punished for a bad performance and slow turnout for the chant off of the previous night and that morning's night visit, various Leaders admitted to me that the turn out had been fairly good and that they had "a good bunch of Frosh this year" (informal conversations with Frosh Leaders, 4 Sept. 2001).

There were many things going on during the Punishment, the most obvious being a total lack of control by the Frosh. New students could only gain control by volunteering. Otherwise, the Frosh were made to line up in a way that was not dissimilar to their usual positions for instruction and were smeared with food at the whim of Frosh

Leaders. This could have been an opportunity to severely punish a person; although all Frosh got food smeared on them, some were singled out for additional punishment. The Frosh controlled this somewhat by volunteering to eat or be smeared with certain foods. Not surprisingly, the “good sports” got the worse treatment (see Lyman; Williams).

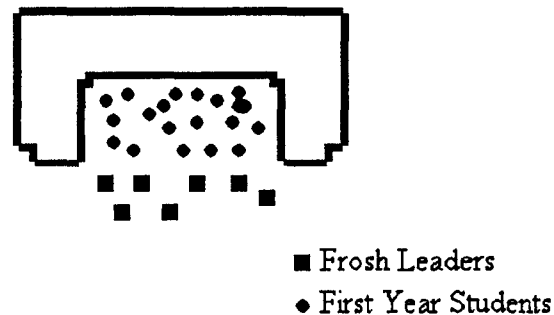


Fig. 9 Typical instruction area for first year students.

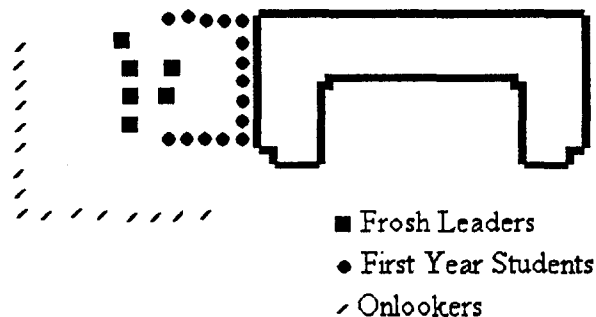


Fig. 10 Instruction area for “Punishment.”

People from other houses as well as older and past house members came up to watch the event (Figure 2 is a photograph of the punishment event). Frosh Leaders had told the Frosh to “wear very old pants and shoes,” also impressing upon them that they would have to wear their Frosh t-shirts and would not be allowed to wash them afterwards.

As students came out of the house for the event they were sent back in to get the

other first year students. There is a function to this time wasting tactic that was also employed that morning when preparing for the night-visit and chant off. First year students learn to be responsible to other members of the house and to do the things that they are expected to do. People who do not start to do what is expected become resented by the other members of the house very quickly because their time is wasted and they see themselves as being punished for the other members' behaviour. Theoretically, one could live with people for extended periods of time without knowing if they hold themselves accountable for their behaviour or if they take others into consideration, but these kind of activities during Frosh Week quickly identify people who do not put the group's needs above their own. Returning students educated the first year students in this "house etiquette;" they showed them the correct behaviour for the group and gave them peer pressure to emulate this behaviour by sending their fellow new students in the house to get them. If new students still refused to comply, the returning students have created a situation in which their own peers begin to resent them and never fully accept them because they have become such a demand on their time and a source of their punishment.

Group cohesion is further embedded into this ritual. There are ideas of self-sacrifice that come into play. Food was brought out and smeared on the various first year students, the idea being that everyone got smeared with something. Many foods were involved, and some of these foods were ingested by the Frosh. (Anytime food is involved, allergies are respected, as Frosh Leaders do not want to inflict pain on someone due to allergies.) This was a point when several Frosh volunteered in order to prevent others from having to be "tortured." One Frosh drank an entire bottle of salad dressing, although he had not been asked to do so by the Frosh Leaders. He arrived a bit late, saw

some of what was going on, and when a leader approached him to pour salad dressing on him, he instead took the bottle and drank it.

Punishment time was also when the Leaders told the Frosh that it is house tradition for the first year students to shave their heads. Many balked at this. The Frosh Leaders told them that if a certain number of people volunteered then they would not shave everyone's head. People then began to step forward at such an eager rate that the Leaders could not deal with the number of head shaves they had to give at that time and some were given later. To a certain extent, this is a "tradition tactic." The Frosh Leaders used the idea that head shaving during Frosh Week is something that they all had to do, that it is a tradition, when really it is not. Although there is a history of hair augmentation it was not carried out the previous year, or perhaps for many years previously. (Hair augmentation arose later in the year during April 6th Day, as will be discussed in Chapter Four). That the House President had shaved his head further supported the story. The Frosh volunteers each had a different letter shaved into the top of their heads in order to spell out the house name when they all stood together. Following this event, the students were reminded that they could not wash their Frosh shirts except if on their bodies. When they entered the house they found that the shower curtains had been removed and they were forced to shower together or at least in the presence of others. They did so with their clothes on. Due to the state that they were in from the food smearing, many people got into the showers together in order to get off some of the muck. There are approximately three showers on each wing, which meant there were about ten people per shower. Waiting for a shower took a long time in this context.

This event was mainly focussed on establishing expected group behaviour and acceptable dynamics. It also helped to alleviate taboos surrounding food, cleanliness and nudity. The boundaries separating public and private space are altered for people who live in residence. During my time in the house I witnessed several contexts in which people were in various stages of undress like one would find in their own home. Men walked from showers to rooms in towels that wrapped around the waist.

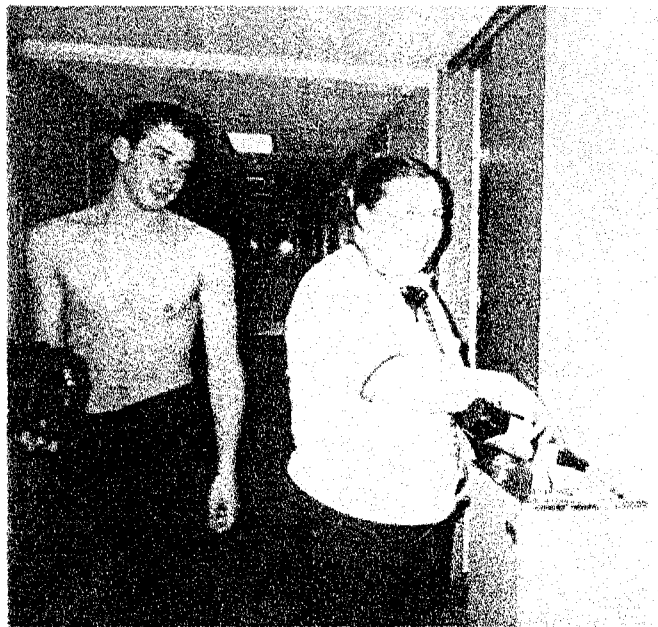


Fig. 11 Boddington Proctor pouring out beer (field photo).

They sometimes even stopped to chat briefly to people. One was caught by a proctor walking through the halls with an open bottle of beer, contrary to the by-laws of Boddington. Although walking between the two points nude would be a problem, semi-nudity, with some degree of decorum, is acceptable. It is doubly important to develop and establish these attitudes and guidelines in a house that accommodates both sexes. All areas of the house are public, even though some areas are more public than others. One's own room and the bathroom are the only areas where one can expect some privacy

and even then these areas are sometimes breached. Appropriate behaviour and attitudes towards fellow residents of the opposite sex need to be clear. It is significant that during my second field trip, near the end of the year, first year students were no longer surprised and intrigued by the opposite sex members of their own house, and instead reverted to a friendly but non-sexual means of creating appropriate behaviour through the sort of teasing one would associate with junior high age children. That, and blatant, open dialogue, created an atmosphere in which men and women within the house for the most part do not see each other as potential mates, although there are always exceptions. Many people I spoke to said that liaisons frequently occur although they are almost always kept secret if the couple is not dating.

Day 3: Wednesday

Wednesday, September 5th, was an odd sort of day; and to a certain extent, not much happened in the following three days. This was the last day before classes began, and for that reason, the residences could not keep their students up late at night. It was also the sole day in which the University administration and the campus Orientation Committee had scheduled a full range of events: "Playfair" (which is essentially a physical game session) and the Video Dance. The two major events that the University hosted were registration for the first year students and the Induction Ceremony, which is followed by a dinner. The Induction Ceremony is similar in some ways to the Black Sunday ceremonies that will be discussed later in the chapter. The Induction Ceremony is a recent invention by the University. Held in the late afternoon in the Courtyard, the central area of the symmetrical campus, it was a ceremony where a gold coloured lapel

pin with a “P” on it for St. Peter’s was given to each incoming student. The students sat in a group while several people including the university president addressed them from a podium. They came forward row by row, giving their names for the registrar to announce as they got their pins. This ritual was very similar to a graduation ritual, and the registrar himself sees the similarity, as he mentioned to the crowd that he will read their names now just as he reads the names on graduation day (Field recording 5, 5 Sept. 2001). Following this was the dinner, and then the Video Dance held by the Orientation Committee. There was little opportunity for house Frosh Leaders to hold events on this day, as many of them are supper and late night rituals.

Day 4: Thursday

Thursday, September 6th, was the first day of class and, in keeping with the Catholic foundations of the university, an Opening Mass was held at 11 a.m., during which classes are cancelled. The major event of Thursday was what is simply called a “walk downtown” by the Orientation Committee. The relationship between the universities and the town is very important. The town has limited industry and the two primary types of employment are government or university positions. The “walk downtown” is also called the “Welcome Home Night in Downtown Anytown” in the Orientation Week programme. All first year students, and most residence students in general, as well as any student who wants to, can partake in this walk which is about two miles long. At several places along the way traffic got held up, and one downtown street was barricaded. Balloons in the colours of both schools decorated the streets, and this was the only event of the week that took place in conjunction with the neighbouring

university, merely by both being in attendance. The school song was sung by the students when they arrived, the students shook hands of the local business people lined up to greet them, they were addressed by various people and organisations, and food was served.

Day 5: Friday

On Friday, September 7th, classes were again in session and the liquor ban was finally lifted. Parties occurred in the residences, with some drinking before attending a concert that was arranged by the Orientation Committee. Things like quiet hours were in effect in the residence, so by the time the concert was over, parties were not going on and the night had come to an end.

Day 6: Saturday

Saturday, September 8th, was the third and final evening that the residents had late activities. What had been called the “slide for life” or “slide for your life” in previous years and was this year referred to, somewhat inaccurately, as the “Condiment Slide,” was assembled by the Frosh Leaders who dumped various foods on a sheet of plastic. It is of note that the predominately male house, Boddington, saw the slide as a tradition that it began and that the other houses have recently begun to copy, although it has been going on for all houses since at least 1993. Boddington performed the event by itself while Laurier and Sacred Heart House, the only two all-female residences, did it together. Weaver Hall did not participate, although they had a food fight as a daytime event, which has comparisons to both the Boddington “Punishment” and the Condiment Slide. In previous years, the Condiment Slide was also held later in the week. Staged on

Saturday, it therefore became a precursor to Black Sunday.

Members of Boddington believe that the slide tradition was performed first by Boddington and then by the female houses, however, it is difficult to confirm this. As mentioned earlier, Boddington is the oldest house and therefore possibly the initiator of many of the residence and campus traditions. As the only male house of a university that began as a male only school, there is also the implication that anything that predates women in the university is a male tradition and therefore a Boddington tradition. On the evening, of September 8th, Boddington performed their slide first, early in the evening. This was due in part to the fact that they were aware that the female houses were doing their slide later that night. There had been some drinking earlier in the evening now that the alcohol ban had been lifted, but people who were drunk were discouraged from participating. Both groups located the slide on upper part of campus, adjacent to Sacred Heart House. They handled the slide in more or less the same way, however, Boddington did a few things as a “warm up.”

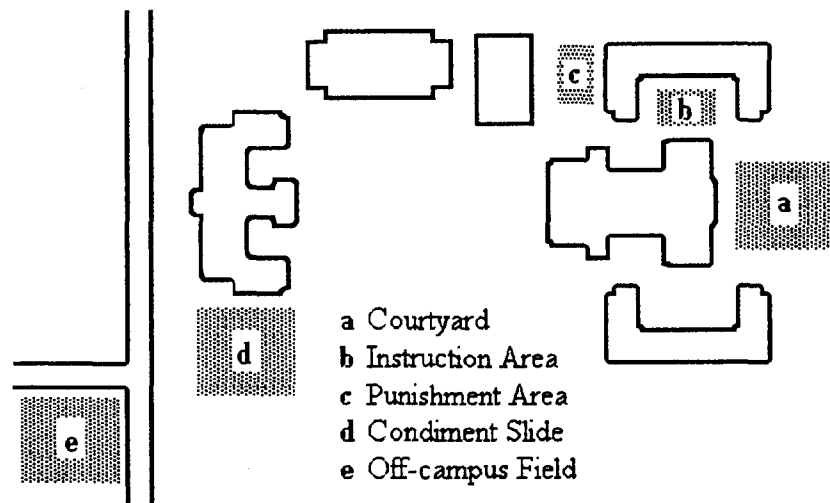


Fig. 12 Map of Boddington Froshing spaces (modified from St. Peter's University website).

The first year students performed the “elephant walk” from their residence to a

nearby field that figures prominently in the mythology of Boddington. Residents perceive it as being located off-campus and therefore an area where they can perform unsanctioned prohibited activity. The field is located about a quarter of a mile from their residence, but is still within view of the campus. In this field they began to instruct the first year students on what they call the “real” Boddington Raiders chant, a song called “Rat’s Ass.”

Rat’s Ass (Field recording 6, 9 Sept. 2001)⁵

Rat’s ass, cat’s ass
 Dirty little twat
 Three blind men, sitting on a rock

Eat me, beat me
 Nibble gobble chew
 We’re from Boddington

So fuck you!

Frosh Leaders purchased or acquired various food which they then spread on a piece of clear plastic about eight feet wide and thirty feet long. A focus for the predominately male group appeared to be theatrics: how far one can jump, or how fast one can dive. The foods used differed slightly between the slides, however, it is called a “Condiment Slide” and there were certainly a number of condiments in it as well as various other items that may have certain meanings for the participants, as I discuss later in the chapter.

The female groups did not do preliminary songs or specialised walks, and tended to focus on crawling the entire length of the slide rather than performing theatrics. This

was often reflected in the Frosh Leaders comments as they cheered the girls on: as the Laurier house President said, “Pull yourself through it, right to the end girls,” “Good job girls,” “There you go trooper” (Field notes 81). The different approach may be nothing more than a difference in anatomies; breast pain was a frequent complaint of those that had done the slide. Many Leaders from both groups also went down the slide. I noted that in many Frosh events, the Leaders took part, not simply as a Leader but also as a participant. The leaders in Laurier house took great pride in costuming themselves in tailored garbage bags for the event. This was more common in the evening events such as the slide or the chant offs, when the leaders also chanted.



Fig. 13 Laurier Frosh Leaders in their garbage bag smocks (field photo).

⁵ See Appendix III: Boddington Songs for annotation.

Day 7: "Black Sunday"

Sunday, September 9th, was Black Sunday. Black Sunday is an incorporation ritual that takes place on the last day of Frosh Week. Although it varies from house to house, in 2001 it was performed by Laurier, Sacred Heart and Boddington, and is treated as a solemn occasion with an almost religious seriousness. This may be one part of the week that is not widely spoken about. When I was trying to find out the times of the various Black Sundays so that I could co-ordinate my attendance at them, many of the Frosh Leaders were shocked because they did not realise that the other houses performed this rite.

Weaver Hall was the only house that did not celebrate Black Sunday. In Laurier, Sacred Heart, and Boddington, Black Sunday was the only "mandatory" "unobserved" event of Frosh Week. As mentioned earlier in the chapter, the judgement at the end of Frosh Week has some history at St. Peter's, at least during the 1940s to the 1960s (SPSN 31 Oct. 1946 and 16 Oct. 1961). A first hand account of the judgement was written in the St. Peter's yearbook, "Then the day to which we looked on with such enthusiasm finally arrived. I (sic) was Thursday of the same week, and that night the mock trial was to be held. What a trial! I can still taste the 'punch' we were served. [...] We were all convicted and sentenced. Our sentences, by the way, were dandies" (St. Peter's University Student Union, 1954 St. Peter's Yearbook 4). And, at least in the past, the rite may have been observed by students of the affiliated university. Through informal conversations with a person who had attended SPU during the 1980s, I learned that in the male residences at the nearby university "Kangaroo Court" was held on the last day of Frosh Week. At Kangaroo Court all the first year residents were judged on their

performance during the week. Anyone who did not do what the Frosh Leaders had told them to do would be punished.

This year, Black Sunday was mandatory in that there was extreme social pressure in all three houses to participate. The only other activity that has this kind of social pressure to attend was the house dinner held at the end of the year, which is discussed in Chapter Four. It was the only event that happened away from the eyes of other houses. Although there were other events that happened privately, such as talks by guest speakers, or song-learning sessions, they were not as secretive as Black Sunday, even though some aspects of Black Sunday happened in public. Black Sunday was marked by physical movement in each house. Although there are other common factors, there are also differences.

Black Sunday was always the final activity on the last day of Frosh Week. The events of Black Sunday happened within houses; the houses did not participate together, nor were they observed by other houses or people other than the participants themselves, i.e. the first year students and the Frosh Leaders. In some ways Black Sunday was similar to the pre-supper events in that the entire group gathered in a central location and awaited instruction. The pre-supper events often started in private space but worked themselves to a public event, going to supper. Even when the pre-supper activities were held outside, as in the Boddington Punishment, they were somewhat open to participation from observers. Black Sunday did not allow for this, and if there were any observers they would be ignored. For the most part, in-house returning students know their place and would not infringe in the activity anyway.

To a certain extent the test of strength, the heroics, the feat or accomplishment

involved in Black Sunday, was having the courage to show up for the much talked up event. From the beginning of the week on, Black Sunday was built up by the Frosh Leaders, who alluded to their own “horrible experiences” of Frosh Week. All three Black Sundays will be discussed here to provide context for Boddington’s particular Black Sunday tradition.

Laurier

Laurier’s rite took place in the early afternoon, around 2 p.m. They first assembled their Frosh in the second floor common room in the same manner as they did for other events. The Leaders talked up how horrible the upcoming event was, until they felt they had made the girls uncomfortable enough:

“We’re taking you to A----- (male house on nearby campus). You have to roll up and down the hill until you puke. Then you’ll continue to roll in each other’s puke as well as your own. When you are done you can wash off in the mud at A-----” (Field notes 87). There was total quiet in the room, stunned silence. Some people looked very angry and made as though to leave. Others had the glazed eyes of disbelief and fear.

They then told the girls that this was actually their opportunity to get back at the Leaders by “pie-ing” them. The day became “pie the Leader,” an obvious subversion. If this were not clear enough, a whistle was blown and the Frosh Leaders said, “We love you Frosh.” During the week Laurier taught Frosh to proclaim “We love you Frosh Leaders” at the sound of the whistle. Awards were then given out to the girls who had been the “best” during Frosh Week. Three awards were given: two princess awards and a queen award. The group then moved outside, into the courtyard, in front of the room

where they usually met. This is where “pie the Leader” took place. In order to buy a pie the girls were asked to give money to charity, approximately fifty cents per pie. Laurier’s returning students did not take part in the outside area: instead they watched from their windows or common room windows. Returning students were basically observers, although they participated by laughing, cheering, or playing music by arranging their stereo speakers in their windows.

Sacred Heart House

Sacred Heart had their ritual in the late afternoon, at about 4 p.m. They assembled outside the central part of their building, in front of the area where they usually met. The Sacred Heart girls were blindfolded, then rearranged so that they were roughly paired up. Each pair then got a Frosh Leader. The Frosh Leader led the pair around the outside of the building, usually in a circular pattern. There was then an entry into the building through the central entrance that led to the room that was their usual meeting place. Here the Frosh were placed on the floor, told to remain quiet and stay still. There was an air of solemnity, accompanied by fear, as the girls did not yet know where they were and what to expect – the familiar had become the unfamiliar. After the Frosh were placed on the floor they were asked to remain there for several minutes. They began to feel physically and mentally uncomfortable: some were noticeably sweating and one seemed near fainting. A proctor recommended finishing up. The girls were told to remove their blindfolds. They were in the familiar room and some party food such as chips, pop, and cake had been prepared for them by the Leaders.

Boddington

Boddington had a less obvious beginning for its event. In the early evening a water fight began, which seemed to be an element. In this water fight it was every person for themselves and there was no Frosh/Leader separation. What Boddington saw as its Black Sunday started at dark. It began with a gathering in the courtyard in front of the building, the usual meeting place, and a trek off-campus to the nearby field where Boddington conducts all its illicit activity. Because of new rules governing Frosh Week, the Leaders could not perform the evening as it had been done in the past. They played down the fact that they were not really allowed to do so.

There was also the fact that some of the previous residents of the house told the new students what the ritual was, thereby ruining the point. Instead, the Leader explained in detail the ritual as it once took place: the Frosh were blindfolded and left in a nearby wooded area, often scared by the Leaders. The Leaders then left, leaving the Frosh to figure out that it was okay to take off their blindfolds. The Frosh then had to find their way back to campus. Sometimes this took several hours.

This year the Frosh Leader told the Frosh a few more stories about legendary house members of the past. He then taught the Frosh "I Used to Work in Chicago," the house song that he noted is designated for drinking:

I Used to Work in Chicago (Field recording 7, 9 Sept. 2001)⁶

Chorus [follows each verse]:

I used to work in Chicago, the old department store.

I used to work in Chicago, I don't work there no more.

⁶ See Appendix III: Boddington Songs for annotation.

A lady came in for a kit kat
A kit kat from the store
A kit kat she wanted, four fingers she got
And I don't work there no more

A woman came in for some hotdogs
Some hot dogs from the store
Some hot dogs she wanted, my foot long she got
And I don't work there no more

A lady came in for a hammer
A hammer from the store
A hammer she wanted, and nailed she got
And I don't work there no more

A woman came in looking for some rum
Some rum from the store
Liquor she wanted, and lick her I did
And I don't work there no more

A woman came in through the front door
The front door of the store
The front door she wanted, the back door she got
And I don't work there no more

A woman came in looking for a Big Mac
A Big Mac from the store
A Big Mac she wanted, my special sauce she got
And I don't work there no more

A woman came in looking for a halibut
A halibut from the store
A halibut she wanted, the Boddington eel she got
And I don't work there no more

A man came in looking for a grape
A grape from the store
A grape he wanted, my cherry he got
And I don't work there no more

A woman came in looking for a piano
A piano from the store
A piano she wanted, my organ she got
And I don't work there no more

A woman came in looking for a ruler
A ruler from the store
 A ruler she wanted, my twelve inches she got
And I don't work there no more

A woman came in looking for some jelly
Some jelly from the store
 Jelly she wanted, jammed she got
And I don't work there no more

A woman came in looking for rubber boots
Rubber boots from the store
 Rubber she wanted, rub her I did
And I don't work there no more

As they learned the song, the Frosh added verses or manipulated the song, something that had not happened previously in the week when they were taught other songs. The atmosphere was much more relaxed and some joking occurred. After they learned the song, the House President and other Frosh Leaders lined up, as did the Frosh. The Leaders shook hands with the Frosh and the House President said "Welcome to the house." This was actually a very solemn occasion, and a clear sign of incorporation.

What is worthy of mentioning is that all three Black Sunday rituals involve movement. Van Gennep noted "the relationship between the actual spatial passage and the change in social position, expressed in such ritualization of movements from one status to another as an 'opening of the doors'" (Rites 11). Each house's Black Sunday ritual involved movement: Laurier from an interior lounge into its courtyard; Sacred Heart from the grounds around it to the interior of the house; and Boddington moving through the territory it considers its own, the courtyard in front the residence to its illicit activity field.

Analysis

University initiation has been going on for centuries, although often in all-male groups: the incorporation of large numbers of female students in the past half-century changes the rituals and adds the second area of sexual consciousness. For the most part, marriage is the rite of passage that would have previously been experienced by most young women after high school graduation, especially before the feminist movement when choices for women were more limited (Ford 75-77). Women have only been in attendance at St. Peter's University since the late 1930s, and there is a distinct difference in the rituals of this university after this time. It appears (through secondary documentation) that, before women were enrolled at St. Peter's, some of the activities as part of the rites may have been subversions of norms associated with the working world. The first year students were required to wear working attire (i.e., their best suit) with mismatched socks and loosened ties as well as pyjama pants beneath their suit pants and one leg pushed up to demonstrate this. In a first hand account from a St. Peter's yearbook a young man related about his frosh experience: "We had to wear pyjamas 24-hours a day. And so as to let people know (sic) of this we had to roll up one pantleg. Our shoes and stockings had to be mismated. Now these are the more or less principal alteration to our usual way of dressing. There were also minor ones which I shall overlook. But by far the cup winner was the sign we had to wear. This sign had written on it our name, hometown, and what we were, namely "A Lousy Freshman" (St. Peter's University Student Union, 1954 St. Peter's Yearbook 4). The major thing here is the obvious suspension of typical dress codes.

In Peter Lyman's article, "The Fraternal Bond as a Joking Relationship: A Case

Study of the Role of Sexist Jokes in Male Group Bonding,” he examined a joke performed at a sorority by a fraternity. He found that “The emotional structure of the joking relationship is built upon the guys’ latent anger about the discipline that middle-class male roles imposed on them, both marriage rules and work rules” (92). It is plausible that for men and women these university rites that celebrate sloth and promiscuity over thrift and monogamy, evidenced in the songs and, by ostension, the April 6th Day ritual discussed in Chapter Four, mark a rejection of marriage and work. This rejection occurs either by choice or by the recognition that these societal norms must be secondary for the university student, at least for the time being.

The major events of Frosh Week for Boddington residents were high context and centred around the chant offs, the wooing, Punishment, Condiment Slide, and Black Sunday. The chant off and wooing rituals were ultimately song focussed, and song rituals continue throughout the year. This present discussion focuses on those rituals that were exclusive to Frosh Week: Punishment, Condiment Slide, and Black Sunday. These three were in some ways the biggest activities of the week, possibly because they focus less on song directly and more on physical and mental endurance. During these three events Frosh Leaders of all three houses discussed the importance of them as “history” and “house tradition,” playing up the fact that they did them themselves previously, as had all other members of the house. Boddington Frosh Leaders talked about being a “true Raider” or rather, not being a “true Raider” if you do not perform these rites. The term “rite of passage” was also often used.⁷

⁷ I did not use the terms “history,” “tradition,” or “rite of passage,” when I began my fieldwork, although I

Frosh Week events follow a definite rite of passage pattern; separation, transition and incorporation all were present. Transition seemed to be the most emphasised stage, and ultimately the area which, according to Turner, deserves the most attention in initiation rites. As Turner writes:

On the whole, initiation rites, whether into social maturity or cult membership, best exemplify transition, since they have well-marked and protracted marginal or liminal stages. I shall pay only brief heed here to rites of separation and aggregation, [often referred to as incorporation] since these are more closely implicated in the social structure than rites of liminality. ("Betwixt" 5)

At the end of the week students then enter into another rite of passage within the house, and the over-arching rite of passage of the university degree which ends in graduation. A point of all these events seems to be structured in order to impart insider knowledge to the first year students and help them deal with their new surroundings.

University life challenges food taboos as social norms that must be broken and reformed. For most incoming students, food would have been prepared within the home and eaten with the family most meals would have been private rather than public, and prepared by the family or members of it rather than by strangers. This changes with residence life. Cafeteria eating is a huge adjustment for many students as it is a change from family foods to a focus on foods because of their economy or the ease of preparation. Food preferences may even change as familiar foods become unfamiliar, prepared in new ways with different ingredients.

The Condiment Slide occurred at a liminal time, after dusk and before daybreak.

did do so after Frosh Week when I realised they were in common usage. I was intentionally vague about exactly what I was collecting because I did not want to be catered to or humoured. I was afraid that events would be staged in order to "please me." I was also afraid of alienating the students with use of jargon or unusual terminology.

It also focused on food, and several of the foods here may be symbolic. While condiments are used, “Condiment Slide” is a bit of a misnomer as any number of foodstuffs may be included in the slide (see Appendix IV for a complete list). In 2001 the foods fell under various categories. There were foods that are unsuitable for eating, either those that are meant for animals (dog bones and dog food) or those that are not typically palatable. There were also foods that were not palatable, may be because they are exotic, such as squid. Household staples were included, such as vinegar and baking soda. And, there were items that seemed to be included because of their viscosity, such as eggs and oil. It was acknowledged by the slide organisers that there must be a certain amount of viscosity in order to lubricate the Frosh as they move down the slide.

There was another group of contents that may be included because of their similarity to bodily fluids: various types of milk, tomato soup, and even beans and gravy to a certain extent can fall into this category. There were also vast amounts of fish and seafood: fish heads, snails, and squid found in the Boddington slide, presumably for the odour. The shared slide of Laurier and Sacred Heart had many similarities in content, but it did not use seafood: instead, it had pickles, wieners, and meatballs. The use of milk was also particular to the Boddington slide. In Purity and Danger Mary Douglas notes that pollution beliefs are often attached to a “symbolic load.” She writes:

But as we examine pollution beliefs we find that the kind of contacts which are thought dangerous also carry a symbolic load. This is more interesting at a level at which pollution ideas relate to social life. I believe that some pollutions are used as analogies for expressing a general view of the social order. For example, there are beliefs that each sex is a danger to the other through contact with sexual fluids (3).

One can postulate about the reasoning and symbolism behind the inclusion of

various foods, but that could invest too much meaning into the activity, however, it is plausible that they represent sexual pollution, as the men's slide uses milk and seafood and the women's slide uses foods such as pickles and wieners that could be construed as phallic symbols. Both slides use foods that resemble body waste products, but furthermore, the slide could be compared to a rebirth.⁸

Aside from the possible symbolism, it is also play. When I asked the Frosh Leaders why they used certain slide they usually simply shrugged. Often things were included because they were "around," typical foods that the residence students would eat. Others were purchased specifically for the slide: it seems "grossness" was as much a factor as viscosity. The Frosh Leaders showed me with pride many of the exceptionally disgusting foods and remarked how gross these foods were. Some were included because they are thought of as always being included, traditional aspects of the slide whose reason for inclusion has been long since forgotten.

It seems that elements of taboo are at work in the Condiment Slide. Many of these foods not only resemble bodily fluids, as mentioned earlier, but also resemble contaminants or their ability to disguise contaminants. Anything red, such as tomato soup or ketchup, could be mistaken for blood or could at least hide it. Similarly, the milk could hide semen and the gravies and beans could disguise fecal waste. Furthermore, the slide was conducted at night in a poorly lit area: some of these things would be harder yet to discover. Certainly there are various fears surrounding food contamination aroused during these types of events. I overheard many first year students and some told me

⁸ See Appendix IV: Condiment Slide Contents for a list of the ingredients of the men's and women's slides.

directly that they suspected the slide was filled with “dog shit,” “cum,” or “cafe scraps” (Field notes 77). I arrived while the slide was being assembled and can attest that the food was coming directly from closed packages in grocery bags. All things that went into the slide were opened in front of me. There is no way except through elaborate ruse that the slide contained any of the feared contaminants as constituents. Nevertheless, the belief persisted.

Precisely because of the fear it aroused, the slide functions as a unification experience for the members of the house. As each person jumped into or pulled themselves through the slide they were cheered on by the other members of the house, showing that they have been incorporated into the house to certain extent by this point. At the end of the slide each person was sprinkled with flour, perhaps a parody of a religious rite, in which after the completion of the slide and the breaking of taboos (tainted food, food waste), participants are purified. It may also be a replication of being tarred and feathered. All three houses did this at their slides, flinging flour on the participants as they finished the slide while other Frosh Leaders ritualistically bathed them with buckets of water.

The blatant waste of food that one finds in the Punishment and the Condiment Slide is noteworthy. These two rituals are probably some of the least problematic of those practised at Boddington, however, they are culturally insensitive to those who come from regions or social brackets where food is scarce. There are problems in using Douglas’s or Lévi-Strauss’s discussions of food; for the most part, anthropologists write about food in subsistence groups, however, the students I deal with have an excess of food, and probably little regard for its sacred aspects. However, Mary Douglas’s article

“Deciphering A Meal,” an exploration of 20th century family eating habits is more closely aligned with my research. (For a discussion of the very real issue of world hunger, see Lappé and Collins, and Fitchen).

Relying on packaged, industrial food, the rituals reflect contemporary North American consumer culture. Food, however, for these students may speak more loudly of other connections. It is no longer reflective of the home with all the positive connotations of family life. Rather, it has become institutional, as all things in their life have. It is a necessity of life to eat, but one’s food is no longer prepared with love with one’s preferences in mind. Instead one must eat when the cafeteria is open, not when one is hungry or when one wants to eat. As Mary Douglas writes: “Like sex, the taking of food has a biological component, as well as a social one” (“Meal” 36), however, for these students the social aspect has changed and they take part in public performances of coded activities which enable them to more easily accept these changes. Douglas also writes: “Drinks are for strangers, acquaintances, workmen and family. Meals are for family, close friends, honored guests,” it is plausible that the Condiment Slide is a ritualistically coded shared “meal” that all the residents take part in to solidify their new bonds to the community (“Meal” 41). The cultural constructs of food are complex; “If food is treated as a code, the messages it encodes will be found in the pattern of social relations being expressed. The message is about different degrees of hierarchy, inclusion and exclusion, boundaries and transactions across the boundaries” (Douglas “Meal” 36). Beyond these codes there are also aspects of “code-making” and “code-breaking” which come into use in a ritualised form.

Eating in residence has to become regimented, so all previous ideas concerning

foods replaced. Because students now live under institutional conditions, there is much routine to their days, primarily in areas that had never been touched by institutional routine before, such as eating and sleeping. One cannot necessarily keep the hours one wants to, staying up all night all the time, because theoretically one would never get to eat breakfast or lunch if they slept too late, thereby limiting them to one meal a day. The students become controlled by the institution in this way.

The Punishment and the Condiment Slide call on notions of carnival. In fact, many things that one associates with the carnivalesque are found in St. Peter's initiation rites (see Shanti's discussion of Bakhtin). A huge focus on the sexual nature of the body as well as the body's role in elimination of waste extends beyond Frosh Week. Perhaps this is common to the age group in general, although it seems to be a coping mechanism that is employed because one has to live with so many people. A Boddington Frosh Leader recounted to me that bathroom etiquette is initially a problem in the everyday life of the first year students. He later addressed the Frosh group and told them that anyone who did not flush the toilet after using it would be made to "eat their own feces" (Field notes 63). Although this was said in jest, it does suggest that first year students often face a problem in adapting to the institutional way of life and their own personal space within it.

While there is much use of the food in the carnivalesque Punishment and Condiment Slide rituals performed by Boddington, their Black Sunday Rituals do not follow this pattern (although the female Black Sunday rituals still include food). The Boddington Black Sunday ritual seems to focus on movement, such as the Sacred Heart rituals, and confrontation or inversion of the norms of the Frosh/ Frosh Leader

relationship. The Boddington ritual begins with the water fight, which is not typically how the event unfolded in the past. However, I noted that the water fight was more of an “every man for himself” event than the previous confrontations such as the Punishment, in which Frosh were not allowed to respond to their treatment. During the water fight, there were fewer Frosh Leaders present, which was unusual, and, for the most part, it was the two main Frosh Leaders who were involved. There were periods of rest during the water fight in which they lounged and joked with the first year students. Although they could respond to the Leaders during the water fight, for the most part the head Frosh Leader and the president did not strike back as hard as they could, allowing themselves to be somewhat victimised, although all jokingly. The one exception to this was a first year student who was filling pop bottles and other things with water while trying to sneak up behind the Leaders. This annoyed the first year students who felt he was reflecting badly on them with his profound disrespect. This water fight took place in the area that Boddington considers its own, an area that surrounds the house and encompasses two spaces (‘a’ and ‘b’ in Figure 12).

The walk downtown, the induction ceremony, and the later part of the Boddington Black Sunday Ritual, the movement to the field, all have something in common: their use of their areas as ritualistic space and their movement within it, through thresholds. Each event is also the last ritual before acceptance, the walk downtown was terminated by business men and townspeople forming a corridor which students had to walk down, getting handshakes to welcome and accept them as they did so. After they ate their meal, they returned home. The Induction Ceremony was very similar, held in the heart of the campus: the first years students moved in a circle, from

seated, to hand shake, to receiving their pin and another handshake, and finally back to their seats. During Frosh Week, Black Sunday is the last of several incorporating ceremonies.

The events of Frosh Week impart pieces of insider information to the first year student, the rites of the house, with Black Sunday becoming the ultimate rite of incorporation. This is supported by the fact that the Frosh Leaders of each house I talked to were not aware that other houses practised Black Sunday, thereby meaning that it must be ingrained with a sense of secrecy for the participants. The importance of secrecy in Black Sunday explains why Boddington chose to change its event this year. The Frosh Leaders feared they had lost some of the mystery surrounding it because people who had previously lived there told the first year students what to expect from the event. Once they have performed the rite, they are then marked as belonging to the house and are not differentiated from the other students in the house. Frosh Week is over at this point. People who do not fit in are not necessarily rejected or victimised, they are instead simply ignored. Fitting in and acceptance through naming and nicknames continues in Chapter Four, which will also look at the events that fall after Orientation Week and determine their importance as ongoing rites of passage.

In Men at Play, Michael Robidoux raised the point that while certain parts of the player's existence is liminal, to say that the entire process of playing hockey is liminal is to be generally dismissive and specifically ethnocentric, especially since professional hockey players spend a huge portion of their lives in this state of being a hockey player (116). Although van Gennep, to my knowledge, did not deal with extended periods of liminality, such as a year or a decade, this is not to say that they cannot exist. It seems

that certain groups within North American culture may go through two rites in quick succession of each other, especially when these groups are meant to be cohesive for long periods of time. For the university student Orientation Week is a liminal state. He or she is incorporated at the end of the week, thus becoming a member of the group, however, they are quickly once again submersed into a liminal state when they are separated from their housemates in order to attend classes or become a member of academe at large. This new liminality may be in place until the person in question graduates, or in the case Robidoux studied, the hockey player retires or is permanently injured.

Aspects of Frosh Week can be cruel and people can feel as though they are being excluded or picked on during this week. Many of the themes surrounding the songs are alcohol related, regardless of the fact that there is no alcohol involved in Frosh Week. This focus on alcohol during Frosh Week can be negative for a variety of reasons, the most obvious to me, though my own experience, is that there may be people living within the residences that are recovering alcoholics. During one year in which I lived in residence I knew of two women on my floor who were recovering alcoholics. There is a definite sexual tone to the songs, and although that may be positive in that it may allow students to play with their own sexuality, it is insensitive to the fact that many students may not wish to do so because of life choices or prior negative experiences. The sexuality of Frosh Week could be directly offensive to students who are not heterosexual, to those that feel that the songs do not reflect their life choices, and to those that feel the songs offend their religious or ethnic beliefs or their own sense of sexual identity.

The houses have started to attempt to address negative messages, whether by choice or to avoid trouble. Sacred Heart changed a song that had numerous references to

alcohol in it to a version that is much less problematic. It is often obvious that the song has been changed, and people are still aware of the common meaning and although they are using different words, they mean the same thing to the people singing it. A prime example of this is the Boddington “shag” and “fuck” switch. When members of Boddington sing the song, they mean the same thing by using the word “shag” as they do by using the word “fuck.” Using “shag” is more acceptable to the university administration; however, it then makes using “fuck” more meaningful for the members of Boddington.

Frosh Week in residence continues to function despite its obvious drawbacks because it offers a quick incorporation to the new group, while entering academia puts students in an extended liminality. Typically, a few years ago, Frosh Week and the first days of classes at St. Peter’s did not happen during the first week, but were separated. At the end of Frosh Week a student has not yet entered the world of academia. Frosh Week’s continual hubbub keeps the new students occupied and gives them a reason to interact, it temporarily relieves some of the academic stress and those anxieties brought on by being away from home and being in a new environment. It also gives students immediate points of common reference before the introduction of alcohol at the end of the week.

When first year students are taught the traditions of their house, that gives them a sense of belonging and identity. They can hide behind the “uniform” of the house t-shirt and simply be members of Boddington house or they can also be individualistic during Frosh Week by volunteering for events or personalising their clothing. Wearing the t-shirt marks one as a generic “Frosh,” and the t-shirts become markers of their low status,

as the Frosh are encouraged to become filthy but only allowed to wash their clothes while they are wearing them. The Frosh t-shirts illustrate the points Turner makes when he writes:

The metaphor of dissolution is often applied to neophytes; they are allowed to go filthy and identified with the earth – the generalized matter into which every specific individual is rendered down. Particular form here becomes general matter; often their very names are taken from then and each is called solely by the generic term for “neophyte” or “initiant.” (“Betwixt” 7)

The t-shirts become a badge of honour after Frosh Week. Many first year students occasionally wear their Frosh t-shirts throughout the year. Others display them proudly in their rooms. During one April 6th Day interview I noticed that two roommates (one of them “Pierce’s Ho”: see Figure 5) had tacked their frosh t-shirts to the ceilings above their beds. Giving the first year student something with the house name on it or the house logo may add to the positive impact of Frosh Week. Frosh Leaders, by providing the first year students with t-shirts displaying the logo of the house, are declaring ownership over their Frosh. While ownership is, of course, another area that can be problematic, it seems to create a sense of unity and belonging. It also starts a collection of residence logo emblazoned products for the first year student, and for most students, this carries on throughout their residence career. For example, I found that numerous returning students in all on-campus houses had more than three things with the residence logo in their room. Among these returning students were both the Boddington and Laurier house presidents and the Sacred Heart House Frosh Leader.

Like their t-shirts, the language and lore that the first year students acquire during Frosh Week adds to their sense of belonging; they now share common terminology with

the other members of their house. The language and legends that first year students learn during Frosh Week and add to throughout the year is the subject of Chapter Four.

Chapter Three takes a second ethnographic look at residence rituals. It considers an event that took place seven months later at the end of the school year in April 2002 when I returned to the field for a long weekend to observe the end of the year rituals of Boddington Hall.

CHAPTER FOUR – “AND WE LIKE TO FUCK AND FIGHT”: ONGOING RITES OF PASSAGE

I returned to St. Peter's and to Boddington in April of 2002 to observe April 6th Day, when theoretically Boddington drinks for twenty-four hours. This event is referred to from the beginning of the year onwards, is a day that some Boddington alumni return for, and a ritual that is compared to Christmas by the Boddington residents. I was invited to it as early as September 2nd (Field notes 16) and for this reason I went to Boddington unannounced, knowing that I would be welcomed. Since, historically, April 6th Day is an event for which older members of the house return, it was not that unusual for me to show up at this time and no one seemed particularly surprised to see me. I did not let anyone know I was coming because I was afraid that letting people know what I was up to might have caused them to change the events in some way in an effort to please me. This did happen to a certain extent during the course of my fieldwork and is almost inevitable in participant observation, but it was only really during this last weekend that I had an effect on the traditions of the residents of Boddington Hall or that my presence affected my data, as I discuss later in the chapter. A second problematic area that I address throughout this chapter concerns the problems and issues raised by gender differences within the house and the way in which male residents deal with sharing space in a historically male house.

I arrived late on Thursday, April 4th and went to Boddington Hall on the 5th, meeting up with Matt and Sam. I explained to them that I wanted to tag along with them as they made plans for April 6th Day and that I was generally there to observe what went on: not to party, but to record the party. It was then that they explained to me that various

events were going on during the upcoming weekend, which was one of the last weekends before the exam period. Boddington's weekend began with the last day of Wing Wars and their House Elections on the 5th, moved into April 6th Day and Turnher Cup on the 6th, and culminated with the House Dinner and awards ceremony on the 7th. Although other houses have elections, competitions and house dinners, they do not have an event comparable to April 6th Day and the Wing Wars competition. For this reason, Boddington is the only house discussed in this chapter.

Wing Wars, April 5th

Wing Wars went on from April 2nd to April 5th, finishing the day of the house elections and the day before April 6th Day. Each of the six wings of the house "warred" against the other in an effort to gain cumulative points and win the competition. Apparently, Wing Wars were introduced circa 1996: "... Wing Wars were introduced in my last year by S---- P----- [a member of the House Committee]" (J.D.).

Wing Wars are considered a healthy means of house competition and predate the introduction of women into the house. They may discourage intra-house competition by providing avenues for explicit competition in socially sanctioned ways. This is clear from the activities that are offered. The Wing Wars Schedule posted in a washroom in the women's wing (washroom postings are common for information meant for mass circulation) listed several events (Boddington Hall House Committee "Wing Wars Schedule"). The events began at 7 p.m. each night and included Trivial Pursuit, Risk and Simpsons trivia on the 2nd, a basketball free throw, bench press, a run, foosball – table soccer played on a specialised table – and ping-pong on the 3rd, and two video game

competitions, Bond and NHL 2001, on the 4th. For all of these events, one or two people were meant to represent the wing. Trivial Pursuit, Simpsons trivia, Basketball free throw, bench press, Bond and NHL 2001 required two wing representatives, while Risk, the run, foosball, and ping-pong required only one, although participation from your wing in the role of audience seems important to most events.

On the 5th the events were ones that required the participation of the whole wing, the chant off and the tug of war. An individual event, a belching contest, was also moved to this time from the evening of the 4th, probably because the venue of the courtyard was better and it is an event which also “requires” an audience. I arrived too late in the week to see the earlier events, and so I will focus on the tug of war, the belching contest, and the chant off.

The Events of the 5th

On the evening of the 5th the activities began around 7 p.m. as had all of the activities throughout the week (Boddington Hall House Committee “Wing Wars Schedule”). The entire house congregated on the steps of the central building on campus, making use of the large courtyard at the centre of the university, an area that had been contested space during Frosh Week, and was still somewhat contested at the end of the year. During this weekend, Laurier was attempting to get a group picture on the courtyard steps, and some of the men in Boddington threw water balloons at the group from a Boddington window.

The competitions began with a speech by the house president, after which the tug of war, belching contest and chant off occurred in that order. Some of the members of

the house were drinking during this time, which was betrayed both by the quality of their singing during the chant off and the various conversations about beer during the night (Field video 1, 5 Apr. 2002).

During this night I was placed in one of the judging positions. A certain number of judges were needed and for some reason they did not have enough. I was asked by Matt and Sam and thought better of refusing. It is not that unusual for someone from outside the house but from within the residence community to be allowed to participate in the events held by one house, but it is regarded as an honour. Although I was a judge it was really in pretence only. Decisions were made in a huddle as a couple of judges (who varied) said their piece about who should win, and the other judges agreed. I had no real role in the outcome of Wing Wars, and the outcome does not really matter as we will see later in the chapter.

The selection of judges was made up from people from the other houses and myself. We stood in the middle in front of the audience formed by the members standing on the stairs. The members of the house stood on the stair area when they were not performing, treating them as bleachers, and stood in front of the stairs when they were performing. In some ways this was very similar to the instruction areas during Frosh Week. Although it took place in a different area, more in the public eye, it had the same “spectacle and audience” feel that the Frosh and Frosh Leaders created during Frosh Week. By the same token, the judges’ position, in the centre and out front, made them the focal point for the performers, very similar to the positions taken by the Frosh Leader and his right hand man during times of Frosh instruction.

Tug of War

The tug of war was executed in the courtyard in front of the central building on campus. The wings were organised in a round robin competition and this was executed rather swiftly. The pattern was set up here that essentially each wing competed against the other wing on that floor, with the winning wing then competing against the winners from the other floors and the losing wings facing off against each other. Each wing then got a ranking. Having first competed against each other, the women's wings each competed against other wings, men and women were competing against each other. The judging for the events became more subjective as the evening went on, but the winning of Tug of War was straightforward: if a line between the two teams was crossed, the other team won.

Belching Contest

The belching contest was a very dramatic performance, since everyone had to remain quiet in order to hear the belches. Each wing was represented, and all six contestants (four men and two women) stood at the very foot of the stairs, faced the president, and belched in front of him, almost in his face, in the order of the wings they represented, (North to South, ground floor to top floor) while the judges stood behind the president a few steps higher. It became clear during this competition that winning Wing Wars was not too important; one wing had not lined up a representative for this event and had to choose one on the spot. The belches seemed to be judged on clarity, resonance, and loudness, with the most important being loudness. Contestants were allowed to drink beer or pop in order to help them belch. One contestant brought out a beer bong,

but this was not allowed by the president because its use was deemed unfair. In the end, after discussion amongst the judges, a woman from 1st T.C. won the belching contest.

Chant off

The chant off, which marked the end of Wing Wars, was the last event and possibly the most multifaceted and, by far, the most subjective. There were no particular guidelines for judgment, although several were implied, including intangible aesthetic criteria. Residence songs were something that the first year students were taught in the first week, and something they performed as a house, whereas now each wing of the house performed its own song. It is obvious by its inclusion in this type of event that song is valued by the house.

Several of the wings that competed during Wing Wars had their songs written on photocopied sheets. Three groups read their lyrics directly off the page. Although they had their songs written out, they did not attempt to learn it rather than read it. It seemed that in many of the groups a few people were responsible for composing the song together and then teaching to the other people (Casual conversations, 5 Apr. 2002). Early in the afternoon I recorded 1st T.C. rehearsing their song, although when they performed it they were singing from the sheet (Field video 1, 5 Apr. 2002). The songs that were performed at this event were all written by members of the house, however, they were similar in some ways to the songs of Frosh Week.

Thematically, many of the songs deal with sexuality. Stylistically, many show the influences of residence song, military song, popular song and traditional folksongs. This is very much like Frosh Week, which had the same influences on its songs, although they

had a tendency towards using children's traditional folksongs. The two women's wings also incorporated aspects of what I would consider the style of chanting more associated with women's houses: they used flirtatious gestures with sexual themes. Some of the men's wing's songs used intentionally disgusting sexual themes or violent language (although not sexual violence). Besides the sexual gestures, this song, performed by one women's wing, 1st T.C., refers to the other women's wing, 1st S.H., in negative ways in a parody first of Salt 'N' Pepa's "Let's Talk About Sex" and then of Britney Spears' "Oops, I Did It Again":

1st T.C. Wing Wars Song⁹

Let's talk about sex, baby.
 Let's talk about 1st S.H.
 Let's talk about all the reasons that you ladies can't get laid.
 Let's talk about sex. (Field video 1, 5 Apr. 2002)

I think I'll tell you again, we're from Boddington
 you might think that we're sluts, it might seem like we're drunks
 but that doesn't mean that we're going to blow chunks
 cause to lose all our senses, that is just not typically us
 oops I fucked him again, I stole your boyfriend, got caught giving head
 oops you think I'm a cunt, I did him just once
 FUCK THAT! We're not Laurier
 You see my problem is this, I'm bitching away, wishing I didn't know first SH
 they cry, during the lays, cause they fool around in, so many ways
 well thy [sic] lost all their dignity, and now they're loose as can be
 oops you fucked her again, you the condom, you should have said no!
 Oops you have STD's, that comes with the territory
 DON'T FUCK 1st SH. (Field video 1, 5 Apr. 2002; lyrics from the song sheet)

Patterns of song composition as well as song function and performance contexts that were begun in Frosh Week seem to be ongoing. Songs are one of the few things that remain constantly present. Old songs are learned and eventually the new students are

able to make songs in the same genre. They are coded and help to differentiate both space and group identity, although now it is individual wings “against” each other not just house against house, although that continues as well. The individual songs for each wing and the competition of Wing Wars in general seem to be a symbolic separation from the house. Song at this point in the year seems to be a way in which to attack members of the house in a protected manner. The song from 3rd S.H., a men’s wing, said “I wanna know if 3rd T.C. shares a brain,” (Field video 1, 5 Apr. 2002) referring to the other wing on their floor. About Matt, one of the Frosh Leaders, they got their revenge, singing “We wanna know why McNarland is insane,” all to the tune of the popular song “Have You Ever Seen the Rain?” (Field video 1, 5 Apr. 2002).

Analysis

There may be more going on during Wing Wars than meets the eye. There is a general attitude of male supremacy, as the majority of the events are those which the men would have more experience in or those that require strength. These at least are the opinions of some of the women of the house, as we will see later in the chapter. Without entering into an argument about the comparative strength of men and women, what I can say is that women who live in the house perceive this as a male oriented event. Initially I thought that perhaps since the events were stereotypically male the men may have allowed the women the upper hand at certain times, letting them win certain events. I first came to this conclusion because, although I did not see all the events held previously

⁹ This song is quoted from a song sheet and includes the original spelling and capitalisation.

in the week, a woman had won the belching contest, 1st T.C, a women's wing had won the chant off (with a chant that insulted the other women's wing, 1st S.H.) and during the tug of war a women's wing had beaten a men's wing, although they were ultimately defeated in the next round. My discussion the day after Wing Wars with some first year women that lived in Boddington proved otherwise:

Jodi: When you have these Wing Wars and stuff, do you sometimes feel like it's stacked against the guys? Or like they're making it too easy for you?

Betty: Well, they have like, Bond video games and NHL video games and stuff and ...

Ainsley: Burping contests!

Betty: ... burping contests. Well, lets have a manicure party and stuff, and see how you guys do on that. Cause how many girls play James Bond video games? Like seriously!? It's a guys' house.

Ainsley: You're guaranteed to, like ... you're guaranteed to, like....

Betty: It's a guys house and we accept that. We know there's two floors of guys and one floor of girls. We're totally dominated by the guys and we accept that.

Ainsley: This was always a guys' residence. Like, we don't care, it's a boys' house. Like okay, we're here to take part and have fun, but it's a guys house, they're going to win. They're going to do little things, they might not even win, but they'll win because it's their house.

Betty: We're just here to provide a little bit of sparkin' it all up, "Let's see what the girl's wing is doing, let's laugh at the girls." It's no big thing. (Field video 1, 6 Apr. 2002).

There is an air of overall acceptance of the status quo within the house, however, this is not a positive thing, as Ainsley says about the men, "They're going to do little things, they might not even win, but they'll win because its their house." Essentially, whether there is a competition or not, the men are winning, and the implication is that they will always win just by being men. The treatment of women during Wing Wars and the possible acceptance of the position "We're totally dominated by the guys and we accept that," create a problem for women's identity within the house.

There is a further complication in that competition within the women's floor is

highly encouraged by the male members of the house, mainly by blatantly insulting one women's wing. "We all slept with 1st T.C., / now we all have STDs" song performed by 2nd T.C., a male wing during Wing Wars is an example of this. The women on this wing take these cues and act accordingly, performing a song that insults the other girl's wing. It seems that certain personalities were attached to certain floors.

Jodi: I find in a house, and maybe you guys can tell me what you think about this, but like, certain floors seem to have like, certain personalities.

Betty: Right. Well I'll tell you. There's two wings, we are considered the "fugly" wing.

Ainsley: Fat and ugly.

Betty: Fat and ugly wing.

Jodi: Oh no, that's horrible!

Betty: But you know what, no...

Ainsley: But the other girls are like, little anorexic people.

Betty: Okay, but this is why, you know, okay... we dress up to go to the bar, but when we go to classes, we don't really care what we look like, you know, who cares? I'm not going to class to impress my prof, I'm not going to class to impress the people next to me, I don't care. They dress up to go to the café, they dress up to go to the gym, they dress up.

Ainsley: Everywhere.

Betty: We don't. And it's so coincidental that all the people who dress up a lot end up in that wing, and the people who don't give a damn end up in this wing. That's all it is.

Ainsley: We could go in our pyjamas if we wanted to. Like I'll put on a sweatshirt, my rip-aways, and put my hair in a ponytail and I'm gone in the mornings. I mean, if I could roll out of bed fifteen minutes before class, that's me. (Field video 1, 6 Apr. 2002).

Categorisation of women depends not only on personalities assigned to certain floors, but on individual students reputations. Betty and Ainsley also had been told about women who had not yet arrived during Frosh Week (first year students, Frosh Leaders and those who have special permission arrive a few days earlier than returning students). They also said that older students would start to categorise first year students according to types determined by previous residents of the house. Naming or grouping people in

Boddington by type seems to be one means of dealing with residence life, but the motivation here may be to cause contention between the two wings of female students in the house. By praising one wing and referring to the other wing negatively, it may be possible to subdue the “threat” of women in the house because they are not able to act as a unified group. If they acted together, the women would be one-third of the house to contend with, however, acting separately they have little control and are less of a threat to the structures already in place in the house. However, this does not seem to be intentional. The divisions between wings and the importance of seeing each wing as one with its own identity seems to predate the introduction of women into the house and may be a manifestation of a need for some individuality in the house rather than total “groupness.”

There are two possible interpretations of this stereotyping which are not mutually exclusive. One explanation is that women have an inferior position in the house, that they are “dominated.” The other is that wings compete with each other regardless of sex, and that each wing gets stereotyped at some point throughout the year. Perhaps women are not specifically targeted, their typification is simply less desirable and more culturally charged. Of two stereotypes that are available for the women, underscored by the “social puberty” stage, neither is desirable. One wing is called the “fugly” wing, which suggests that they are fat and ugly, while the other wing is sometimes referred to in ways that suggest they are sexually promiscuous.

2nd T.C. Wing Wars Song (Field Video 1, 5 Apr. 2002)

[Sung to the tune of “Camptown Races”]

We had sex with 1st T.C.

Doo-dah, doo-dah
 Now we all have STDs
 Oh the doo-dah day!

[At “STDs,” the men grab and/or scratch their crotches and twirl]

This stereotype for the female wings is comparable to the general attitude in Boddington about the two women’s houses on campus. A joke from Boddington about Sacred Heart circulating the previous year was that all one had to do to find Sacred Heart girls was “follow the trail of poutine sauce from the café” (informal conversation with Sam during Frosh Week), implying that the women are overweight and possibly, by extension, unattractive and undesirable. Laurier is also the subject of some abuse from Boddington. Terms like “Four floors of whores” or “those whores” are common references to the women of Laurier Hall during Frosh Week when house rivalry is played up for chant offs. One evening during Frosh Week when a night visit and chant off was to take place, the Boddington frosh were encouraged to go to Laurier with a rousing shout of “Let’s wake up those whores!” Although they are typically meant in jest, such remarks serve to segregate Boddington house from Laurier house during Frosh Week. They also insure that Boddington women do not become extremely friendly with Laurier women. This is not to say that Laurier and Boddington (and Sacred Heart) women never become friends, but they are often placed in competition with each other or are encouraged to regard the other group negatively.

Jodi: What about people just people just sleeping together, does that happen very much in the house?

Ainsley: Not so much this year, we heard a lot of different thing, like, [that happened] last year and stuff, but not this year. I’m sure that is might happen that we don’t know about, like do you know what I mean, like it could be “top secret”...

Betty: Oh, I’m sure, I mean, I’m sure, tonight [April 6th Day] there’s going to be a

lot of poontang going upstairs, but most of the time you don't hear about it (Field video 1, 6 Apr. 2002).

Even Betty's referral to other women as "poontang" shows that there is obviously some distaste for other women and an effort to distance herself from them, especially those that have sex with the men that live in the house.

Ainsley: the thing about Laurier is about how they love to get with our guys and like "do the walk of shame" like back to Laurier next morning, it's just because they love to get with our guys (Field video 1, 6 Apr. 2002).

The "Walk of Shame," is the walk home the morning after or a return to the house in full view at an odd hour, obviously after a sexual encounter and often from another house.

The expression is also in use at King's College in Halifax with precisely the same connotation (Johnston 15).

Betty and Ainsley, along with the other girls from their wing (1st S.H.), sang a song at Wing Wars that reflected the cheers of Sacred Heart (the other group on campus referred to as fat by the members of Boddington). The "U-G-L-Y" chant, which has been integrated into this song as a chorus, was usually performed by Sacred Heart. This song also insults Laurier and the men of Boddington.

1st S.H. Wing Wars Song (Field Video 1, 5 Apr. 2002)

U-G-L-Y you ain't got no alibi
You ugly, hey hey, you ugly

Laurier girls like to do the walk of shame
Too bad the guys don't remember your names
Our boys come to you for an easy lay
But come back to us for the rest of the day

M-A-M-A how you think you got that way
Your mama, hey hey, your mama

Everytime we see you stuffing your faces

That might be why you can't fit in small spaces
 We're the best, it ain't no lie
 So take your STDs and wave good bye

P-A-P-A [...]
 Your papa, hey hey, your papa

You confuse class with a night at the bar
 But wearing makeup to gym is going too far
 You're trying to [...]
 That's why you all ain't got no boobs

U-G-L-Y you ain't got no alibi
 You ugly, hey hey, you ugly

All you guys do is masturbate
 That may be why you can't get a date
 [...]
 All you do is drink and drool

U-G-L-Y you ain't got no alibi
 You ugly, hey hey, you ugly

It ain't no earthquake so you can all calm down
 It's just 1st S.H. walking around.

The “fugly” wing has tried to empower itself with the name and its connotations, and one room I visited even had a decoration that the roommates had made with the word “fugly” on it. As in Lyman’s analysis of the fraternity joke, it is possible that the male members of the house mean this terminology as a joke, and expect the women to take it as “good sports.” The women, however, have not been socialised in this way and so object. The women on the “fugly” wing described themselves as more interested in academics than men, and less concerned with appearances than education as part as their justification for, and defence against, the name. Their ability to take a joke, illustrated by their song in which they say about themselves “It ain’t no earthquake so you can all calm down / It’s just 1st S.H. walking around,” is probably what has gained them the “fugly” nickname

rather than a sexually suggestive name. It seems that they get a certain amount of empowerment by appropriating the insults directed at them (fat and ugly) and, by turning it around, suggesting a situation in which the other residents are afraid of them, more in keeping with the men's more aggressive "Raiders" stereotype.

There is no winning with the two stereotypical options for women: one must either be overweight and unattractive or promiscuous, but 1st S.H.'s acceptance of joking makes them "one of the boys" and they are therefore "de-feminised" by their nickname. Their song makes use of the two stereotypes, and turns them against the other women of the house, and, in this song, some of the other women on campus. Even though one wing is typically identified with one stereotype, when the women sing the songs both stereotypes are directed at the other women. It indicates, to me, that they do not accept their stereotype within the house. This is confirmed on the Boddington Hall website, where there is a guest book in which mainly men of the house make entries that insult other men, often their best friends. One of the few women who wrote something there, a girl from 1st T.C., claimed "1st tc are not hookers" (Boddington Hall website).

The songs of the Wing Wars do not simply target women: they also make certain statements about men, and those stereotypes are no more flattering. "All you guys do is masturbate / That may be why you can't get a date / All you do is drink and drool."

The men's wings chants' rarely make mention of their own status other than in a boastful way, and sometimes even attack individuals in the house by name (which the women's chants did not do). When the men mention a wing, they do so using the stereotype associated with that wing rather than trying to deflect all stereotypes off of themselves. In fact, some of the worst attacks that are coded in the songs are those that

are made by men towards other men. As noted by both Lyman and Williams, the male focus of joking is often to determine a good sport, and this is true during Wing Wars. The public nature of the events means that one can say anything and not be attacked. If one is insulted through song, all one can do is simply take it. Thus was the case with the following two songs.

3rd S.H. Wing Wars Song (Field video 1, 5 Apr. 2002)

[Accompanied by a guitar, the song first begins with the theme from Fraggle Rock, with accompanying hand claps. The remainder of the song is a parody of Credence Clearwater Revival's "Have You Ever Seen the Rain?"]

[...] mom's a ho
 She produces midget porn
 This ho, is a fan of sixty-nine
 For some sex you will obey
 She has arms, he says no way
 These hos, are much more than fodder.

We wanna know, why McNarland is insane
 We wanna know, if 3rd T.C. shares a brain
 And if their moms we should spay.

You can say the [...]
 Is some porn that may have starred those hos
 Hope they don't cut me with a knife

D----- K----- needs to grow
 Every [...] they must know, they'll know
 We'll know them asunder

If they wanna go, we will bring the pain
 But we wanna know, what disease are had by S----
 Fucking that, you'll pay

Girls they may go, but sex is where they came
 Girls they may have a flow but real men do not complain
 Unlike Bob, we don't pay.

2nd S.H. Wing Wars Song (Field video 1, 5 Apr. 2002)

[A call and response]

Those in the rest of Boddington
 They really really suck
 They don't know how to party
 And they don't know who to fuck
 They don't get any tail
 And they can't even fight
 There's nothing like 2nd S.H.
 Who are the "Raiders of the Night".

In case one would be tempted to ascertain that only men's language is extremely sexist and problematic, I should clarify here that many of these terms are campus wide, and language used by women can be just as sexist and derogatory. I collected the word "Poontang" from Betty, by which she meant, as in army slang, female genitalia.

During fieldwork I attended a talk at Laurier. While I was waiting for it to get underway, a girl remarked "I got my skin," during the course of conversation. The use of getting "skin" here was the same as in common usage, "had sex." Similarly, a list of terms from the 1997 Sacred Heart yearbook includes "Poonnannie," quite similar to the use of "Poontang" presently found in Boddington. It is possible that the terms are employed by the female houses in an effort to fit in, or as a means of empowerment through ownership of the language, however, both avenues are open for interpretation.

House Election and House Committee, April 5th

The house election was well underway when I came to campus on the 5th. The positions that were being voted on were House President, Vice-President Internal, Vice President External, Secretary, Treasurer and Head Frosh Leader. The results of the vote are not important to this ethnography with two exceptions. The newly elected house

president does not drink, which was a major discussion in the house as it may have an impact on next year's April 6th Day.

The second issue raised during this time was that the current House Committee had to turn over their power the day after the House Dinner, three days from the day of the elections. Matt and Sam, outgoing House Committee members, had just received a cheque for the House Committee which represented the house's portion of money made on the Pepsi machines in Boddington. Since the outgoing House Committee was leaving, and the fiscal year was ending, they wanted to use the money in the coffers. Matt and Sam, as members of the House Committee, ended up doing most of the April 6th Day planning. Because April 6th Day is Boddington's big party, a certain amount of house money had already been set aside. It was further anticipated that the t-shirts that would be sold on April 6th Day would bring in more money. The major beer distributor with whom the house is involved guaranteed a gift of a certain number of cases of beer for each House Committee member over the course of the year. However, the House Committee members had saved this beer for distributing to the house during April 6th Day (see Appendix VI).

As of April 5th, the House Committee had an additional eighteen hundred dollars to spend as they saw fit in the next three days. From my field notes:

The set up here is a classic frat-house situation from a college movie: the house has gotten a sudden windfall of cash (from their Pepsi deal) that they had not accounted for in the budget (\$1800). They already anticipated making money for April 6th Day, so they were already in the green. They are also selling April 6th shirts that they make money on. (Field notes 124)

I spent most of April 5th running errands with Matt and Sam, we drove all over town in Sam's girlfriend's van to pick up the t-shirts, went to the bank where we saw Boddington

residents selling their books at the bookstore for April 6th day money. Matt and Sam somehow managed to get the cheque through quickly, and I lent them my cellular phone to make calls.



Fig. 14 Sam and the vending machine proceeds (field photo).

April 6th Day, April 6th

April 6th Day is, in some ways, the culmination of the patterns set up in Frosh Week. Negatively, the focus here is liquor, but positively it is a house event in which all members are invited to take part. It allows the house members to feel that they are part of an ongoing tradition and, with the return of alumni, the world at large. April 6th Day gives the house something to be proud of, and this pride can be positive regardless of the fact that the means of achieving it (such as drinking massive quantities of alcohol) may not be viewed as positive by those outside this community. The house prides itself on

drinking long and hard on this day, as two first year women told me.

Jodi: Are there many, like, do you think most of the house is like, drinking and stuff today?

Ainsley: Like, I'd say...

Betty: Like at least 85%

Ainsley: 85 to 90% of us are all drinking, no doubt about it.

Betty: There are some people who don't drink like Madison, he don't drink...

Ainsley: Our house president for next year.

Betty:... And a couple of people, like, they don't drink, you know. And they're still out mingling and having fun you know, they just don't drink.

Ainsley: [Raising her fist in salute] Hard core Newfies man!

Betty: Us, on the other hand, you and I, any excuse to drink...

Ainsley: We'll do it.

Betty:... And we'll do it. This is an excuse for us to drink so we're like, living it up.

[...]

Jodi: How early did you guys hear about this?

Betty: I heard about this before I came to university.

Jodi: Really?

Betty: Most people didn't hear, but I did, because my friend used to be a Proctor here. And she told me about when I worked with her last summer. She's like "You wait till April 6th Day!" I'm like "What's April 6th Day?" She's like "Oh my god, you wait and see!" So I knew about it probably before most of the frosh. (Field video 1, 6 Apr. 2002)

By far, the most widespread Boddington legend is the one associated with April 6th Day.

A former Boddington house President, one of the "Old Boys" who returned for the day, told me that the previous year the house committee had wanted to put the story of April 6th Day on the T-shirts they make for the event. They had been unable to find out the "true" story behind and so opted not to put the legend on their shirts at all. The residents have a history of wanting to know the "true" stories, leading them to fill in the blanks in stories or often mention an attempt by someone to substantiate the story. In fact, during my fieldwork the appeal was often made to me to find out if the stories I was told were true or not. This was especially the case for both the "April 6th Day" legend and the

campus wide legend, “The Man in Plaid,” essentially a version of the widespread campus killer legends (see Brunvand Vanishing 57-62, Bronner 157-59).¹⁰

I was told several versions of the April 6th Day legend during my fieldwork, and several of the residents tried to fill in the blanks in the original narrative. Details were added to validate the narrative and these details always varied, as is common in the collaborative nature of legend. This much can be said for commonalities of the narratives: “guys” wanted to go to a concert (the number of guys going is not consistent) and were unable to go for whatever reason, so they began drinking using funds they had allocated for the concert.

Many people tried to justify why the guys did not go to the concert. Other varying details that were added included the concert location and the band at the concert. I have opted to give a few of the participant’s versions for the legend in order to show how widespread it is and in what groups one finds it. Although I could have gone further, since everyone that I asked in the house knew the legend, I present four versions below to show its extent: the Boddington Hall website (a private site not affiliated with the official university web pages and maintained by the House Committee); the Director of Student Affairs and Boddington “Old Boy” Frank Ross; Matt and Sam, current older members of the house; and Betty and Ainsley, first year female students who live in Boddington.

¹⁰ A crazed lunatic (wearing a plaid shirt) escapes from a nearby hospital’s mental ward and makes his way to the women’s residence via the underground tunnels. He comes up in Laurier house where he rapes and kills several nuns. Accounts vary at this point, however, they include several of the following factors; the police kill him when he returns to the tunnels; a cleaning lady finds the dead man’s plaid shirt in her locked cleaning closet; the man now appears as an omen, if he sits at the top of your bed, something bad is going to happen, at the foot, something good. Note the similarities to the “Campus Massacre” series of stories. This tale is also set in sometime within the 1960s or 1970s, around the same time those stories began circulating.

It will probably impact the legend in future years that this year's April 6th Day version has even made it into a mass mediated version on the Boddington Hall website. It reads:

April 6th Day started in 1988 (roughly) by a couple of guys who had tickets to a Stevie Ray Vaughan concert, and for some reason could not attend. Instead of accepting their fate, they decided that if they couldn't go to the concert, they would bar themselves into their room with a couple of 24's, and drink all day. The next year, a couple more guys got into the spirit, the year after that, a couple dozen. Now, April 6th Day is a campus wide drunk, where Boddington Raiders opt not to attend class, instead partaking in the April 6th Day tradition of drinking all day, and all night. In the words of a former Boddington president, "it is the only time of the year that you are drunk, and hungover TWICE in the same day." This year should be no different, as Boddington Raiders will come together and get totally SHITFACED for one whole day. The countdown is on. (Matt, Boddington Hall Website, 8 Apr. 2002)

This page also had a countdown timer with the days, hours, minutes and seconds to April 6th Day noted. Having a written version of the legend will undoubtedly affect the legend, leading people to use it as the "real" version, but since it is still widespread in the house it will probably continue to be negotiated and manipulated by the audience. As previously mentioned, the culture at Boddington is highly oral and have a tendency not to rely on printed media. For example, Boddington songs are transmitted and learned orally, allowing for variation and fluctuation of repertoire from year to year. (Specially written songs and chants for occasions such as Wing Wars, which are meant to be performed only once, are exceptions to this.) Other houses like Sacred Heart and Laurier have written versions of the songs and, although they may not give them to the first year students, the Frosh Leaders in those houses still use the text as a reference.

At the urging of some of my informants, I spoke to Frank Ross, an administrator who had attended the university for many years and was there when April 6th Day began.

Although he was not one of the two people mentioned in the legend, he was a “friend” of theirs. It seemed that once he began working at the university the legend got another dose of “authority” as it probably received from the website. Frank Ross was widely regarded as “the person to talk to” regarding the legend. Researchers working in the field of contemporary legend have often found that when legends are told the source of the legend is a “Friend of a Friend” (Brunvand, Vanishing 4). The source for the legend is often said to be a doctor or a policeman, someone who is educated and trustworthy. I was therefore not surprised when Frank Ross was said to be the definitive person to speak to; trained as a lawyer and the head of Student Affairs, he obviously had some authority. Paired with this was the fact that he had lived in Boddington in 1988, the year when the April 6th legend was said to have begun.

Jodi: I was told you might know something about April 6th Day

Frank Ross: Yeah, I do.

Jodi: Yeah, what do you know about that?

Frank: Well, I guess I was there when it sort of started.

Jodi: Oh yeah?

Frank: Yeah, I wasn't there for the triggering event. Some good friends of mine, three of them wanted to go to a Stevie Ray Vaughan concert at the A----- centre but they didn't have the money so instead they bought a flat of beer and got hosed. Just as kind of a one off comment I guess it happened to be April 6th, I guess that would have been 1988 and one of them said, hey, we should do this every April 6th. So the next year they got a few of their friends together, myself and a few others, and said, yeah we'll call it April 6th Day, we'll put up posters, said hey, it's April 6th Day and proceeded to just drink. Some folks came by and said what are you doing and we said, hey, its April 6th Day we have to take the day off class and just drink and listen to tunes and people thought that was kind of a neat idea and so the next year everyone put up signs on their door and said, its April 6th Day, that's why I'm drinking. For some mysterious reason, after we all left, it kept on. (Field recording 16, 2 Oct. 2001)

It should be noted that Frank Ross talked about his involvement in a somewhat sheepish way. By this point I had spoken to him various times and had got to know him well

enough, however, once the topic was brought up his mannerisms visibly changed. One can notice here as well that as he used the customary slang when he constructed his story about the event, “flat of beer,” “got hosed,” and “tunes.” He does not customarily use this type of language.

I contacted another “Old Boy” via email who began living in the house four years after the triggering event.

April 6th - Started in late 1980's, maybe 87, 88 or 89??, I--- W----- should know all about this one. Anyways (sic), my understanding was that a bunch of guys were going to go to a Steve Ray Vaughn concert, but when the day arrived, they discovered that they had no cash to do it, so they made the obligatory trip to P----- St. to get a few beers. They went back to their rooms, maybe 4 or 5 of them, put on some Steve Ray Vaughn tunes and listened to his music and drank all day. They had such a good time, that they decided to make it an annual thing, and I am sure that they never thought it would get this big. I think one of them ripped a towel rack off the wall, and this became the ceremonial septr (sic) of the event. The first few years were kinda quiet, these same guys were around for a year or two, then some new guys took it over. Sometime in the time I was there, 92-96, the house committte (sic) got a hold of it and started to make a big deal of it. It was always a function where the participants would drink all day, but gradually more and more people got involved. They made t-shirts a couple times, and one year we had the hosue (sic) dinner on the same day. When I look back now though, I don't think there was as much drinking as 20-year-olds like to make out. By that I mean that there were really relatively few people drinking all day. Most people did that night, but few did all day. (J. D.)

J.D. gave a version including the House Committee's initial involvement in April 6th Day. It became an organised event rather than one that is organic. We also begin to see material culture associated with April 6th Day: while previously Ross noted that they made posters one year, we now find towel rods as ceremonial sceptres and T-shirts. It is possible that there were more items associated with these events but they are simply not remembered at this time by J. D. and Ross. (It was not a question I pursued.)

I discussed April 6th Day with people in September 2001. The two residents who

later organised the event, Matt and Sam, had already been through it a number of times, however, unlike Ross and J. D., they have not had a number of years to distance themselves from what is occurring.

Jodi: We'll start with something easy. Tell me about April 6th Day.

Sam: Well, April 6th Day was started in, apparently we've been saying ...

Mike: 1987

Sam: ... 1988, we found out last year that it was started in 1987 by a bunch of guys who had Stevie Ray Vaughan tickets and they lost them...?

Matt: No, they just couldn't go.

Sam: Okay, they couldn't go. I thought they lost them and it was sold out so they couldn't get more.

Mike: They didn't go.

Sam: Anyway, this is the way it always goes, we just kind of, the tradition is sort of blurry and we all hear different things. Anyway, they had tickets, they couldn't go so they decided to barricade themselves in the room by piling beer cases in front of the door and they wouldn't leave the room until those beer were gone. They had a bucket in the middle of the room to take care of business or use the window if they had to ... (pause)

Jodi: The way it should be.

Sam: Yeah, and it was a pretty big mess and it all started on April 6th Day 1987.

Matt: And after that, the next April 6th..., you know, this was like, three or four guys, the next April 6th, you know, ten guys drank.

Sam: And then twenty-five.

Matt: And then like, thirty.

Sam: And now we're up to the whole house, the whole campus knows about April 6th and it's just a big drunken day of mayhem. It's pretty fun. Our director of student affairs is a Boddington alumni and he used to ... he used to take it off. He used to take the day off when he was working as a lawyer.

Jodi: Oh yeah?

Matt: A good one to talk to would be Frank Ross he was in Boddington for like the first April 6th Day, but he didn't participate in it cause like Sam said, it was just like, a couple of guys. If you want to ask him exactly what happened he does know.

Jodi: I heard through the grapevine that he was there.

Sam: Oh yeah, he's old Boddington, he knows his stuff.

Jodi: So now, when you guys have it, when do people start drinking and stuff?

Matt: Midnight on...

Sam: Ah, yeah, (laugh) we start at midnight on April 5th.

Matt: And when you get out of bed on April 6th....

Sam: Yep.

Matt: You start drinking.

Sam: Yep.

Matt: You get up, dress and drink.

Sam: Yep. My personal tradition is I get drunk the night before, I go to sleep, get about four hours sleep, wake up at 8:30, go get breakfast and have breakfast with a Guinness.

Jodi: Oh yeah.

Sam: It's a good way to start the day.

Jodi: (laughs)

Matt: To quote our President last year, this is his quote so I'm going to credit for him, "April 6th Day is the only day of the year that you are drunk and hung over twice in the same day."

Sam: Yep, that's very true.

Jodi: That's cool. So, does most of the house participate?

Sam: I'd say about 90%.

Matt: Yep

Jodi: What about the girls?

Sam: Yep

Matt: Oh yeah.

Jodi: Cause this started out as like a male tradition

Sam: Yeah, the girls go all out. (Laughs). Do they ever!

(Laughter from all of us).

Jodi: I gather there is more to that.

Sam: Yeah.

Matt: Take that in many different contexts.

Sam: Yeah. For what it's worth. (Field recording 17, 28 Sept 2001)

In addition to a good deal of bragging about the amount of drinking here, the two tell the story in collaboration. This is not necessarily that uncommon in Boddington, but it adds to the lengthiness of the story, meaning that each person can add details and facts can be negotiated.

I collected one more version from Betty and Ainsley during a conversation in the early evening of April 6th Day.

Jodi: Why are you drinking today? What is today all about?

Betty: Today is April 6th day and since... In 1988 a couple of guys apparently wanted to go to a Stevie Ray Vaughan concert, and they went, and their ride left without them. So they had all their money, so they came back to Boddington and locked themselves in their rooms and spent all their money on beer and just drank the whole day! That was it, nothing to it. And it happened to be on April 6th 1988, so today is April 6th, 2002 and we're carrying on the tradition and that is why we're drinking, because its like this big shindig. Almost like Christmas,

except, you know, there's no like, you know... religious aspect to it. It's like the drinking holiday that Boddington made. It's like a... I don't know how to put it but... (Field video 1).

[...]

Ainsley: This is a really big deal, like even people that come back... that used to live here they're all here today with their t-shirts, like even old guys.

Betty: This is a big day, like this is like, the Boddington holiday.

Ainsley: This is the biggest thing ever (Field video 1).

[...]

Betty: So much spirit, like so much house spirit, like the whole house is involved its like this big tradition that has carried on for years and years and years. And its so amazing, that people come back from like, years ago, that come back, come back and celebrate April 6th Day. Its such a major tradition, like its so awesome. Like you see people that were like "Oh, I lived in Boddington, like, four years ago, and like, April 6th Day, all the way!" And you have, like its awesome: two guys that tried to go to a concert made this tradition be so amazing, awesome. This tradition will carry on for years and years and years as long as there are people here that want to drink this tradition will be here. This tradition will carry on forever (Field video 1).

[...]

Betty: Everyone knows that this is... if it takes part... if it takes part during the week, like a Wednesday, they know, Boddington won't be at school that day.

Ainsley: Like usually, like Boddington, is like a huge deal. Like this year, it was on a Saturday, but like usually, its during the weekday, and like you wouldn't go to class, you'd be out in the courtyard, you'd go to supper drunk, like nobody would go to class that day, like it was just this thing Boddington... it just so happens that this year its on Saturday, but usually its like during the weekday, you miss your classes, you get drunk, you go to the cafeteria, you show everybody what you got, you know? Its really fun.

Betty: Makes you feel really cool, like "I'm from Boddington, you know, I got, we've got house spirit, look at us," you know what I mean? Cause Sacred Heart or Laurier they don't have nothing like this, you know, like it makes you feel special.

Ainsley: They might have their parties and we might have not have got one off the ground so far this year, but April 6th Day is a guaranteed, like this is going to be a fucking party. (Field video 1, 6 Apr. 2002)

Events of the Day

April 6th Day, 2002 occurred very similarly to the way in which it was described in the various versions that I collected. Of course, I was able to collect more information

about the current April 6th Day than about those in the past. There were differences in things I did not think to ask “Old Boy” informants. Ultimately there were things that the older informants had not thought important to mention and that I had not thought to ask until I personally observed April 6th Day.



Fig. 15 House Pride: The April 6th Day banner (field photo).

It started to gradually dawn on me that the majority of the traditional legends of Boddington house depend on ostension, the process by which people act out themes or events found within folk narratives. My use of the words “ostension” and “legend trip” here may be a liberal interpretation of those terms as used by Dégh and Vázsonyi as well as Ellis, however, much more is going on in Boddington than simply ritualised events based on a legend. It may be that ostension is a good way in which to instruct a large group of people about the traditions of the house, although I have not found any scholarly literature that suggests that ostension could be used for pedagogic purposes. It may simply be a desire for a hands-on approach as opposed to simply carrying a oral tale in

one's repertoire. Often when the April 6th Day legend is told a few lines about the continuation of the event were included as they were in all four of the versions listed earlier in the chapter. I found that not only was April 6th Day a form of ostension, so were the certain house awards, which were given to people because they embodied a legend about a person. I found that ostension also occurred regarding the Turnher Cup legend, which will be dealt with at the end of the chapter.

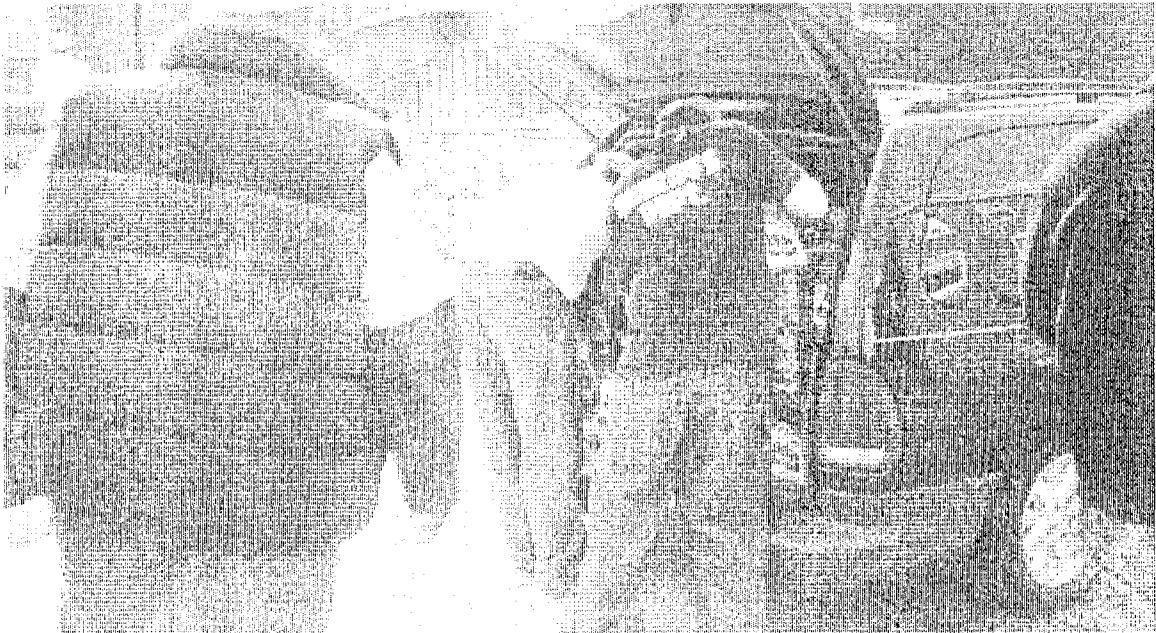


Fig. 16 Unloading the beer, April 5th (field photo).

The House President's role in the house is of an unending importance, as is his room as a symbol of the office, especially during April 6th Day. The House President's room may change from year to year, but only in accordance to what room is better suited for the purpose, not what room previously belonged to the person that was elected President.¹¹ In Boddington the House President's room is on the third floor located near

¹¹ Also worthy of note here is that the President's room is on the third floor, a male floor. There has never been a female President in Boddington Hall, possibly because of the association of the room or office with

a staircase, and the April 6th Day beer is locked in a storage room ten feet from his door. It overlooks the courtyard in front of the building so one can observe who is coming and going in the house, which is important during major events as one can also communicate easily from that room to the outside. The President's room is of great importance during April 6th Day, because as the major party room in the house, and the area in which the beer is dispersed and the t-shirts sold, it is the centre of the ostension. As mentioned earlier in the chapter, there was a concern over the fact that the incoming House President did not drink, and some residents were speculating about what this would mean for the house. In the legend, it does not specify in which room the first April 6th Day took place, and it does not hint that any of the people that took part in the event were the president.



Fig. 17 Selling books for April 6th Day money: on our way to the bank on April 5th, Matt, Sam and I found two residents turning in their books before exams for quick cash at the adjacent bookstore (field photo).

the position. Essentially, if there were to be a female President, the location of her room would change the dynamics of the house. Since the location of the President's room is seen as important by the community, it actively discourages women from this role.

April 6th Day, for most intents and purposes, is a “legend trip” (Ellis) which involves the entire house. Trips to the liquor store are made, parties are held on a room by room basis; these are not unusual occurrences for a residence party. The details that are specific to the April 6th Day legend are sometimes present. This year, for instance, the music of Stevie Ray Vaughan was played throughout the evening, although interspersed with other music. One guy dressed in a Stevie Ray Vaughan type of outfit while others wore hats from the 1980s, the era in which the legend took place. The timing of the event went according to legend; people rose early and began drinking.



Fig. 18a, 18b Encouraged by his off-camera friend, this “Boddington Raider” performs. Such play is expected during April 6th Day (field photo).

It seems that there was a common pattern to the way in which many older residents began drinking. The first beer or few beers were often with roommates or neighbours. Either individually or as a group they eventually moved to the president’s room to buy a t-shirt and to have a beer, which the president himself usually handed to them. This action is similar to the solemn handshake from the president at the end of Black Sunday and is an incorporating gesture after the house separation for competition

during Wing Wars the evening before. The beer was not always drunk there, and most of the women left with their beer. After the beer, or a few, the people would gradually make their way back to their wings for wing parties held in rooms, with a few exceptions of some people from the president's circle of friends or people that lived on that wing (Field video 1, 6 Apr. 2002).

Although several people had bought things specifically for April 6th Day, the majority of the house did at the very least purchase April 6th Day t-shirts. J.D., in his e-mail, mentioned that the t-shirt was a House Committee addition to April 6th Day.



Fig. 19 Customising the April 6th Day shirt (field photo).

The t-shirt is indeed very popular, and some of the Old Boys who returned to the house that night were wearing theirs from previous years, and those who were not were given a gift of this year's shirt. I was personally given a shirt by the house, but I didn't wear it, having decided that it would not only send mixed messages, it would also identify me as a member of the house which may be ethically problematic. As a result, on several

occasions I was asked why I wasn't given a t-shirt. The t-shirt is deemed very important, and is another item which was also found in Frosh Week.

The t-shirt often becomes the inexpensive uniform of the student, and if anything is needed in order to give it some individuality or identifying features, marker can be used or even tape. Many of the women in the house changed their t-shirts, several got people to sign them, while others simply folded by the sleeves to make it more fitted, and a select few cut away material to make the shirt into a halter top or cut off tee. Of course, these three changes often existed in combination, creating something like a signed cut off tee-shirt with rolled up sleeves.

There were also a number of specialised drinking containers. A by-law in the residence does not allow for open beer bottles in the hallway. At one point, several years ago, similar by-laws existed, and the residents were not allowed to have glass beer bottles in the residence at all. Now, however, this by-law leads to people getting covered plastic glasses to drink out of, but the most prevalent method for dealing with beer in the hallway is to rip a corner out of a garbage bag and place it over one's entire hand along with the bottle.

Many people, men and women, also wore hats. The men's hats were of the "trucker" variety while the women's were outlandish. Hair augmentation seemed to be a big factor during the evening. A few men dyed their hair or shaved their heads. One could reason that hair augmentation, implying a deviation from one's hairstyling norm, is popular around times of festival. There were certain times in which hair would not be cut, when the house used to have a fairly strong intramural hockey team (and a large varsity hockey presence in the house) the men would not shave their beards during

playoffs, because to do so was considered bad luck. Indeed, the hair dying during April 6th Day was very unusual because one was drinking and partying and dying one's hair.



Fig. 20 Boddington women wearing their April 6th Day hats in the cafeteria (field photo).

It is a very public (and one would think inconvenient) time in which to attempt a cosmetic change of this magnitude, however, it seems that it is important to change one's appearance on the day itself and not in the days leading up to the event. Hair dying or head shaving was not found among the women, although they may have adopted different hairstyles that day: because of the variety of hair choices for women it was difficult to tell. The men who were having their hair shaved or dyed did so with their room doors open, becoming a performance spectacle both for passers-by and those in the room.



Fig. 21 Hair augmentation: dying hair (field photo).

The change in looks for the event may tie into the need for public performance and entering into contested space during this time. On the previous day, April 5th, the last event of Wing Wars was held in the central courtyard. Now, during April 6th day, members of Boddington went to the cafeteria (after many of them have had six hours of drinking) to eat supper and sing songs. Many people began drinking in the morning, around 11 a.m., and it is possible that a few began before that. The majority of the house had been drinking since 3 p.m.

Ainsley: We went to the cafeteria at suppertime like our whole house chant was there...

Betty: Singing and chanting.

Ainsley: ... everybody like, we were the spectacles, like we were singing...

Betty: So much fun.

Ainsley: ... our house chants and going crazy. (Field video 1, 6 Apr. 2002)

April 6th Day definitely has aspects of public performance and space issues: a

supper performance of “Rat’s Ass,” “Boddington Raiders,” and “I Used to Work in Chicago” occurred accompanied by dancing in the cafeteria, the aforementioned social hub of residence life. This public display could also be seen as protest against the sharing of contested space, but the same could be said for the entire April 6th Day phenomenon.

April 6th Day as Protest

On April 6th Day I had a long discussion with a former House President of Boddington house, one of the “Old Boys” who had returned for the event. He compared the current April 6th Day with ones of past years, noting some discrepancies. He began with the fact that April 6th Day usually falls on a weekday and so it takes on a different meaning when one has to skip classes in order to drink for the duration of the day. That meaning is quite complex and may mean different things to different groups within the house.

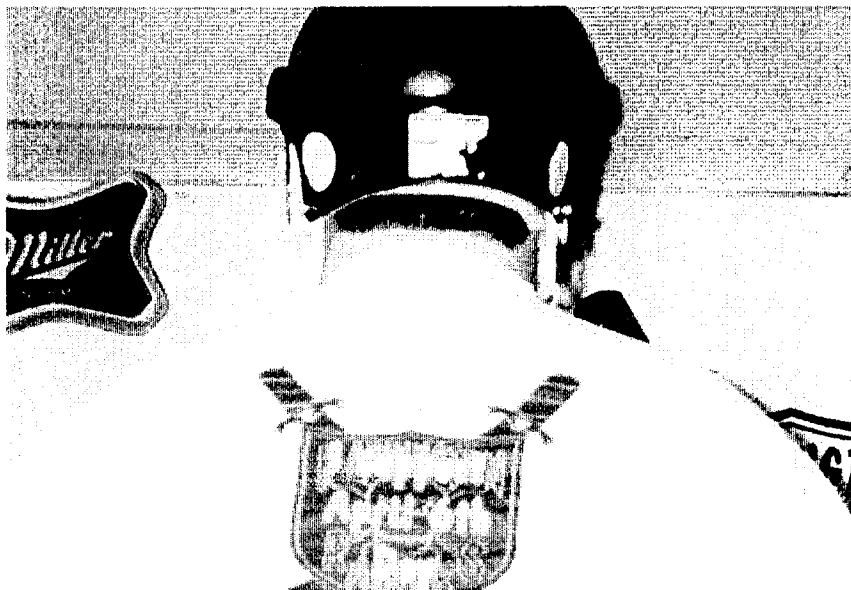


Fig. 22 Old April 6th Day shirt: “I Support April 6th Day” (field photo).

During Matt's April 6th Day room party, current residents told various stories about certain professors who complain about the level of noise coming from Boddington on this day; one person explained that by complaining about Boddington to their classes, professors make Boddington more appealing. There are also apparently professors who assign papers to be due on April 6th as a means of showing their contempt for it, thereby requiring students to come to class and shirk their responsibility to party with the house. It is unclear if these are real incidents or simply legends as well, however, members of the house were deeply impressed when both a professor and Frank Ross, the current Director of Student Affairs, came into the House for an April 6th Day beer. They were pleased to get support from those in authority.

On April 7th, Matt and several other older members of the house expressed their feelings that April 6th Day is a form of protest. The past president and I had also discussed this the night before. Frank Ross is very pro-student, a likeable man who previously went to St. Peter's and was a resident of Boddington. The former residence administrator, Tom Price, was what one might call a "hard hitter." In his defence he came to the university when it was on the cusp of some large changes and in need of a disciplinarian. Just before he was hired there had been a drug bust in Boddington, and a year or so after he was hired Boddington had its women's wing added and a new residence was acquired for the university. He was probably overworked, and there are now two student affairs positions, the Director and an assistant. Price was instrumental in instituting a new proctor program for the houses as well as bringing in some new conduct regulations for the houses.

Regardless, Tom Price was perceived as being heavy handed towards Boddington

house. The house had the reputation of a party house and Price wanted this to change. There were several conflicts between the residents and Price: for example, he did not want them to put out a banner advertising April 6th Day on their house. Older residents and Old Boys say that April 6th Day became an anti-establishment, anti-authority, anti-administration, anti-Tom Price day. Of course, newer residents this year did not experience this fully, as Price has left and Ross is installed in his place, alleviating some tension. Furthermore, April 6th fell on a Saturday, removing the anti-establishment message that is typically sent to a university full of students and professors. Since Tom Price has been replaced by someone that the students perceive as more accepting, Frank Ross, the day has ceased to be an anti-authority day, although an air of counter-hegemony remains. Frank Ross will never be associated with this day negatively because he was there when it all started, he said nothing about the April 6th Day banner, and, like many Old Boys, he returned to the house this year to have a beer.

It is hard to say if a more easy going administration will lessen the perceived need for April 6th Day as a form of protest, however, it seems that more than the explicit "persecution" of Boddington is being contested. Problems such as shared space will probably continue to be an issue. There are too many variables to plot the future of April 6th Day. For instance, it is explicitly and historically a drinking celebration and next year's House President does not drink, although he has promised the house that his room will still be open to a party on April 6th Day. However, the president's room may not have the same role as an "ostension enabler." In the ceremony that is April 6th Day, the President has a huge role in doling out beer and maintaining a constant party in his room, so this may be affected. One also wonders about the ability to have April 6th Day on a

Sunday, as will be the case in 2003, on a highly religious campus where Boddington house is located directly across from the chapel. Undoubtedly, this has previously occurred, it is unclear how it is dealt with as these present students have not experienced an April 6th day on a Sunday.

Turnher Cup, April 6th and 7th

The Turnher Cup was a betting pool on the evening of April 6th with the proceeds collected on April 7th. The betting was not open to everyone, it seemed to be loosely organised by a network of friends for their own enjoyment and it is doubtful that too many people knew that it was going on.

When I began doing research at St. Peter's I looked at old issues of the campus newspaper in order to identify common rituals. One such ritual was the "Turnher Cup." The Turnher Cup was essentially a sex contest, one that revolved around bedding certain types of women. I talked to a few professors at SPU with little result, and even the past sexual harassment advisors could not tell me anything that seemed to be very conclusive. I began to play with the fact that the Turnher Cup (to the extent that it was thought to exist) may be simply a legend, a legend that began to be practised by ostension.

I contacted one alumnus, C.D., who had written an article on the Turnher Cup in the St. Peter's student newspaper in November 1992. There is always talk that the tradition had been going on for quite some time, but I speculated that if indeed it ever went on, it was within one small group of individuals. I had relatively little success in finding out any information about the incident other than the student newspaper article even though this event was purportedly in the not too distant past. I wrote to the author,

who had been a resident in Boddington at the time and has long since graduated, asking him if he would be willing to share his point of view with me and he willingly agreed:

Basically, a rumour got started in the Residence community that the Turnher Cup had re-emerged in Boddington Hall. The whole premise behind the concept was a group of Boddington Residents had a competition to see who could “sleep” with the most girls by the end of the year with points given for such scores as “ugliest/prettiest,” “Smallest/Largest”, etc.....you get the picture. Well, coincidentally, there was a couple of “misunderstandings” that resulted in allegations of Harrassment (sic) (not related to the Turnher Cup rumour). The TC rumours combined with what the men of Boddington percieved (sic) as Sexual Harrassment Paranoia resulted in my article! Of course, this sparked a lot of controversy (most controversial piece of writing in my short journalism career) and the results were interesting to say the least. The general reaction from the Women on campus was outrage.....basically, I had no right to pen such an article as I was a resident of Boddington and I made it look like the women on campus were paranoid....valid, I guess! (C.D.)

It seemed that the allegations of wrongful behaviour in Boddington spurred on the growing support for Sexual Harassment legislation at the university, or, at the very least, the claim that a sexual competition was going on within Boddington created a climate in which all members of the house were perceived as predators. Although there was not necessarily any truth behind this rumour of the sex contest, it was suggested that it had gone on for a number of years. This led to the same sort of ostensive behaviour already noticed in a number of Boddington legends. The event was mentioned in the student papers in 1987 (SPSN 25 Mar. 1987), and again by C.D. in 1992 (SPSN 18 Nov. 1992). In 1987 it was described as a hockey team event, not unlike the listing of “pucks” and “dirties” as related in Thin Ice, and, in 1992, as C.D. explains below, it became an enactment by the rugby team. Knowing what we now know about the joking relationships in Boddington, this may have been an attempt by the rugby team either to tease the hockey team or to show a sense of good naturedness by adopting the garb of

that which they were being accused of, wearing a scarlet letter. As C.D. went to tell me:

But the interesting [sic] reaction came from the Boddington Residence. Rather than rally around the “yeah, you’re being paranoid” idea, there were a group of guys who actually went out and made Turnher Cup ball caps and proudly wore them around campus! (my reaction to them was....Meatheads!) Like all rumours and controversy.....about 3 weeks later it was like it never happened! So there is the history of that incident in 1992. My thoughts.....the Turnher Cup rumour was started by a bunch of guys in Boddington who had nothing better to do than cause shit! (that was the year of the T.C. wing 2nd floor riot) Most of the guys that were involved either flunked out, decided not to return or, in one case, expelled from campus! I was and am still quite confident that it was not happening and it was a big hoax. I knew most of the “hat toting” cup contenders through rugby and they thought it was funny and a good joke! (C.D.)

A need for material culture such as a hat does not seem out of the ordinary in comparison to the hats of April 6th Day and the t-shirts associated with April 6th Day and Frosh Week.

During my fieldwork in Boddington in September, I casually asked about the Turnher Cup, revealing as little information as I could to the few people that I asked. When I received no information about it, I assumed that it was no longer practised. Imagine my surprise and horror when I returned for April 6th Day and realised that I may have been responsible for a form of the Turnher Cup continuing as a small group of older students were taking part in a betting pool surrounding April 6th Day. As Cushing discusses in his article, “The Cock and the Mouse,” where he inadvertently told a tale that entered the storytelling tradition of the Zuni, I had created an unintentional field experiment. A few Boddington men were betting on who would have sexual liaisons as a result of April 6th Day. The people who were bet on supposedly were not informed, quite different from the legend as it was earlier rumoured to be practised, where men attempted to get the most points for having sex with specific women. From the few small

details I had given a handful of residents (three at the most), they may have been able to construct a narrative out of it and resurrect the tradition. The people who now took part were very quiet about the whole thing.

The bet placed was two dollars. I am not sure how the bets were placed, but since they are familiar with sports pools one would assume that they ran it in a similar way, each bettor picking a number of people, or using a full list of people from the house and randomly giving each bettor a "roster." I only found out about the betting because one of the people that I frequently spoke to, although never recorded, was asked for money in my presence. When given an inquiring look, he volunteered that it was a Turnher Cup thing.

On April 7th, when I dropped by the residence before I left town again, a group of men went into one of the bettors' rooms. It was made fairly clear to me that I was not invited. One of the residents told me "I think you better go." I am sure that at this point the results were announced and the collection of the prize money was made.

April 6th Day was, in many respects, a very depressing event. The air of sexual expectation, the excess of drugs and alcohol, and the betting were eye opening. Although it was very much like the seedy underbelly of residence life that is often depicted in popular culture, it was a controlled chaos for only one day a year. The party never got as bad as it could have, perhaps because the house dinner was planned for the following night. The Turnher Cup re-enactment was much cleaner and far removed from the initial event which may have never existed but which was rumoured to be awful. It is a good illustration of the ease of resurgence of a tradition within the house, which could occur at anytime due to the influx of Old Boys and the continuation of family lines in the house.

The Turnher Cup betting pool, like many of the awards of the house dinner, may actually now serve as a enforcer of the social mores of the house.

House Dinner and Awards Ceremony, April 7th

House awards are given out at the House Dinner each year. The house dinner usually falls around the same time as April 6th Day. Many of the awards given out at the dinner are named after legendary people. To my knowledge, none of these awards are named after women, despite women having lived in the house for a number of years. The awards are not necessarily a positive thing; some point out bad behaviour and often serve as an embarrassment to the people who receive them, an inversion of a typical award-giving ceremony. Besides the half a dozen named awards that continue from year to year, there are also awards given out on each wing. Recipients of the major awards are decided upon by the House Committee rather informally. The smaller awards that each wing gets are composed by their wing representative (or wing rep), a person chosen from very early on in the year to notify their wing about house activities and House Committee decisions that affect them. Often the awards are composed in collaboration with others, however, it is a highly secretive process. The connotations of these awards are often negative. The Newell legend and the Robbie Sinclair legend are associated with awards that are given at the house dinner.

Matt: There's this one guy, Newell.

Sam: Newell.

Matt: He's a legend.

Jodi: There's an award...

Sam: He has an award named after him, yeah.

Matt: He is known as the biggest cock ever to be in Boddington.

Jodi: That's funny because somebody told me something about him but they

never told me that part at all. They must have not wanted to. They said that there is a Newell award, right?

Matt: But its nothing to do with that.

Jodi: Okay.

Sam: "Biggest cock in the House" (all laugh). No, the award is for the most converted, the most perverted.

Matt: No, converted.

Sam: No, I know.

Matt: Usually it's set to someone who comes here as like, a timid little geeky Frosh that comes here.

Sam: Doesn't drink.

(This session continued to the Robbie Sinclair story) (Field recording 17, 28 Sept. 2001)

There is more to the Newell story. Essentially, Tom Newell came to the university as a relatively shy country mouse type and was mentored by partying ladies-men, leading to his own success as a party animal. Although it may seem as though this award would be warmly accepted by the recipient, it isn't always. The award implies that although you ended up cool, and maybe even one of the most popular people in the house, the older members know that you were not always like this. This conversation was recorded at the beginning of the year, but by the end of the year, it had been decided that Matt would be the recipient of the award. Although he had been involved in the decision process, Sam seemed concerned that Matt may not respond well to receiving it because of the negative implications. It is also interesting to note that this type of transformation is the stock of many of the popular campus films with I discussed in Chapter Two.

The awards are often indicators of how not to behave, and are perhaps the last chance for the group to tell you what they really think of you. Many of these named awards probably began as wing awards and were picked up the next year. One Old Boy that I contacted via email told me, "The faces change but the stories stay the same when

it comes to legends” (J.D.), and so perhaps this explains the continuity of legends long after these people are gone. They serve as illustrations of behaviour to emulate or to shy away from.

Jodi: There’s other awards too, that you guys have named after people, right?

Matt: The Robbie Sinclair award. Least likely to return to Boddington. Robbie Sinclair never studied. (Refers to other guy there). He knew Robbie. Tell her about Robbie.

(Other guy): Robbie was, like in the lounge all the time.

Matt: He didn’t do anything. One time Liam walked by and saw Robbie reading a book so he took a picture. He figured he’d never seen it again.

(Everyone laughs) (Field recording 17, 28 Sept. 2001)

Infringing on shared public space in the house “in the lounge all the time” is a big no-no. As previously discussed in Chapter Two, many of the rituals try to show some distinction between home life and institution life, and make an effort to train the students into this new mode of behaviour. Robbie Sinclair, sometimes called “Slobby Sinclair,” did not follow the unwritten rules of residence. He seldom went to classes, and it was related to me that the only reason he got a girlfriend was because she was one of his roommate’s friends: as he never left the house he apparently had few opportunities to meet women. He infringed on his roommate’s life by being dirty and by never going out in order to give the roommate some privacy. He infringed on the house by hanging out in the lounge all the time. This behaviour was unacceptable to the house members at large. These awards act as a means of social control. For students that do not follow the unwritten rules of residence they can act as a means in which to discourage them from coming back.

Such was the case with a wing award the previous year which was made up by a wing representative and presented at the house dinner to one Boddington resident. Often

with these awards, an event happens earlier in the year, which many people think goes unnoticed. This event will later be brought up in the context of the house dinner, an event where there is a certain amount of decorum and the person can be humiliated by the group, while the group has no fear of retribution. Previously, the award recipient, who we will call Bill, had eaten a portion of his roommate's submarine sandwich that had been left in their small fridge. Bill, who was thought of as a jerk not widely liked, was regarded as not having taste buds and so was unaware that he was eating tainted food, a sandwich which his roommate had ejaculated into and a drink which he had spit in. He is given an award at the house dinner that explains to him that he ate the tainted sandwich, therefore embarrassing him in front of the whole house, after he received the award he quickly left the banquet and did not return to live in the house the next year (Field recording 18, 28 Sept. 2001). This legend is similar to the contemporary legend "Hold the Mayo" (Brunvand Too Good, 199-200). For people that are aware of the awards they serve as a reminder not to behave in the notorious manner which the awards recognise and discourage.

Conclusion

The Wing Wars, April 6th Day and the House Dinner conform to the familiar structure of rites of passage. As well, these end of year rites are the last "house traditions" in which Boddington residents participate. Wing Wars was a clear separation from other members of the house, April 6th Day was a transition, a liminal festival, while the House Dinner was a shared incorporative event. Together they demonstrate that rites of passage do extend beyond Frosh Week and throughout the year. Just as there are

people who are not incorporated after Frosh Week, those who leave or who many not feel accepted into the house for whatever reason, there are those who are not fully incorporated at the House Dinner through their receivership of “awards,” while others are favoured for personifying the spirit of the house, as volunteers were during Frosh Week.

The community then dissolves for the summer. It existed a mere eight months and will never be totally recreated again, a fact which I will explore in Chapter Five where I will also discuss several questions that were posed to me during my fieldwork and subsequent presentations.

CHAPTER FIVE – “NOTHING GOOD CAN COME FROM THIS”: CONCLUSION

I have framed this concluding chapter around four questions, paraphrased from ones that I was asked numerous times by peers and participants over the course of my fieldwork, as a consequence of presenting my research, and in casual discussions. They are open-ended questions and I have paraphrased them to be reflective of the general sentiments that were voiced. The questions deal with preconceptions, participation, perpetuation and the persecution that residents feel is directed at their traditions from academics and administrators.

Preconception: “Why Are You Wasting Your Time?”

I was asked by members of the St. Peter’s residence community why I was wasting my time studying them, because they reasoned that they were not important, especially to people outside their group. Many of the students I interviewed were in their first year and perhaps did not have the experience to grasp the concept of what I was doing, although the older students and even faculty had problems as there is not a history of folklore studies at St. Peter’s. I spent a large portion of my time at St. Peter’s explaining myself and my discipline.

It was made clear to me that other people implicitly viewed my research in the same way. During the early part of 2002 I was enrolled in the Graduate Program in Teaching at Memorial University, an optional multidisciplinary graduate course. Part of the course was structured around giving a presentation about our own area of research. I found that not only did I have to present on my area of interest, but I also had to explain my field, something most of the other students did not have to deal with. In a class in

which people were looking for cures for cancer, I found myself trying to defend both the validity of my research and the field of folklore. Even within my discipline, I realised that I was looking at a non-traditional area of folklore study, researching a young and largely heterogeneous group that was essentially on its way to becoming part of white collar society. Although university is seen as a great opportunity, especially by graduate students and academics who have presumably committed themselves to the concept of the university, I soon learned that many people did not view residence life at all positively when I began presenting on the subject. This was mainly due to their preconceptions and the influences of popular culture. When it was based on their own experiences, it was often far removed, in time and in setting, from the context of St. Peter's.

One of my initial impetuses behind studying the folklore of university students was that I saw them as marginalized in the field by both their youth and their status as university students to such an extent that they themselves did not think that they were worthy of study. Ironically, they are considered a group enough to be both marginalised and subject to prejudices but not enough to be considered a potential or viable community or folk group. As has been mentioned throughout this work, the marginalisation of the students of St. Peter's is further compounded by the marginalisation that comes from being a small university in the Maritimes.

Rites that occur in institutions only seem to get attention when something goes wrong within that institution. Young adult groups such as hockey players or students in residence are given very little "adult" supervision, which at this stage in their life can be a positive thing. However, their interstitial status – social puberty – implies a continued

responsibility on the part of their parents for their welfare, and residence life perhaps does not provide the security that parents were hoping for. St. Peter's had proctors routinely present during initiation, but these proctors also went through the rites previously themselves. A prerequisite for the job is to have lived in residence before. While this can have benefits in the creation of community, it can also be negative as there are no unbiased third parties to which people can communicate if they have issues with what they are being asked to do.

Such was the case with "Thin Ice," a television documentary of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation's The Fifth Estate which was a direct response to sexual misconduct charges laid against Junior A hockey players and coaches. The charges led to a focus on the initiation practices of hockey teams, going on to look at various incidents of hazing that had taken place and the treatment of women that "attach themselves" to hockey teams, which the players commonly referred to as "puck bunnies" or "dirties." The documentary uncovered not simply a few isolated incidents but commonly accepted attitudes and systemic patterns of behaviour.

Groups such as hockey players or residence men can become highly stratified and live in what can be called consequence free environment. The team or university reputation protects them when they do something that falls outside the norms of the mainstream society. I have very few direct examples of stratification in my fieldwork because two groups within the campus, the rugby team and the hockey team, were so highly protected and stratified that I could not find out anything about them. Conversely, the preconceptions I had going into my research were not well founded: the initiation activities in Boddington did not involve alcohol and were fairly benign, while the

Boddington Frosh Leaders actually instructed the first year students about proper attitudes towards women (Field recording 6, 8 Sept. 2001).

Participation: “Don’t People Ever Say No?”

My brother Tim came to Newfoundland to live with my husband and me when I was starting the thesis writing stage of my Master of Arts and my husband was beginning his PhD. Tim had recently graduated from high school and was planning to go to university in New Brunswick. He wanted to live in his own apartment with friends, and my parents, thinking that he was probably not ready for that responsibility, wanted him to live in residence. Over the years my father, uncle, and I had openly talked to him about our experiences living in university residences. Although we did not realise it, the result was that our personal experience narratives as members of a residence community were appalling to him. It is difficult to explain to someone who has never experienced residence life that you enjoyed pulling pranks on people and almost enjoyed it more when people pulled pranks on you. My brother remained adamant that he would not live in residence, while my parents remained adamant that he would not have his own apartment, and the only option as they both saw it was for him to move in with me.

As my brother has told me numerous times since, the stories that I told him about what happened in residence did not appeal to him. He could not understand why Frosh Leaders felt the need to wake new students up in the middle of the night to sing or why new students would consent to be woken up. He did not have problems with all of the aspects of residence life (for example, he enjoys the occasional alcoholic drink, dirty song or joke), but he was terrified more of the sense of uncertainty involved in the

initiation process and the feelings of inferiority he would feel if he were subjected to the authority of students only a few years older than he for what could be described as a systematic humiliation.

In Thin Ice, hockey player Ken Dryden relates similar feelings. Because he came in mid-season and was never initiated, he feared that his initiation could happen at any time, even after he had been a professional hockey player for a number of years. Hockey and residence initiations can be exclusionary, because the incoming people must take part or else suffer the consequences. In hockey these consequences can range in severity, from going through a year with relatively few friends to losing one's dream of a possible hockey career. As one of the young men in Thin Ice said "Well, the upside of taking part in this kind of hazing is that the veterans will love you as a rookie. The downside if you don't take part in what they tell you to do it can result in getting in fights with the veterans, basically just quitting hockey."

The imagined humiliations in these types of rites seem to be worse than the actual humiliations. As a University of Guelph administrator stated in Thin Ice, "It's all mind games." The accounts that were presented were largely from hockey players who had not done the initiation, and their accounts contained phrases that made it clear that they had not witnessed the events that they were describing, only that they had heard about them. One potential hockey initiate was given a list of things to bring to an initiation party at the University of Guelph, and on that list was condoms. He said he thought a woman would be present with whom he and the team would have to have sex, but he had also "heard stories of a cat being there." Because of the stories he no longer wanted to participate in the initiation, but an inquiry into the event showed that although alcohol

was present there were no sex games as he had feared.

I am reminded of my own residence experience in which there was one ritual where we all had to drink from the same bowl, which was supposedly filled with foul substances. What exactly the substances were was left to our imagination, however, like the Boddington condiment slide, there was no contamination, only rumours that played on common fears.

There is a palpable need to participate in the Frosh Week activity in Boddington even though the repercussions of non-participation are not extreme. The majority of students seem to realise that if they go along with events using minimal resistance they will soon be accepted, just as the hockey player related in Thin Ice, “the veterans will love you as a rookie.” Many of the first year students volunteer to go first, or volunteer to take additional “punishment,” sometimes sacrificing themselves for the good of the house, a trait that is encouraged.

Other students are probably influenced by popular culture, as I discussed in Chapter Two, and seem to simply play out their roles as they have been portrayed in the media. There are, of course, some repercussions for the people who do not participate, and for those who either over-participate by overacting or for those who simply do not fit in. Alex Evans was a recent graduate who had lived in Boddington for many years. I had learned from various sources outside of residence that he was not what one would call “cool.”

Jodi: Yeah. Do you guys know Alex Evans? How did he make out in the house? How does some one like that make out in the house?

Sam: (Sigh)

Matt: We just left him alone.

Sam: Every year we get some... that just...

Matt: don't want to be bothered... they're really not bothered. The only people that are bothered are the people that come in and try really hard. If you try really hard you're going to be put down. But if you just come in and try to live your life, then you know...

Sam: You're bound to make a few friends, I mean there's 200 and some odd people in here, you're bound to find someone you can get along with. (Field recording 18, 28 Sept. 2001)

Mike also told me about a group of Boddington students who were called the "cool nerds." This seeming oxymoron occurred because the group of "nerds" was mainly comprised of scholarship students, and they all hung out together in a large group. Someone with a large group of friends is cool, although they may be a "nerd." They were not "trying too hard" to change their status in the house.

Naming was a way in which those who were not accepted were identified.

Certainly, a large percentage of the house did not have explicit nicknames like "Big Sexy" or "Sarge", but there is usually some form of casual address. However, it seems that residents who do not participate in the orientation activities in the acceptable way (non-participation or trying too hard) or do not make any attempt to belong to the house by following the new rules social rules even receive this casual address. There was one such student during my research who was perceived as being problematic during Frosh Week. When I conducted fieldwork in April I found that he was an extreme case, referred to by his full three-name title, John Robert MacPhee. The awkwardness of his "nickname" underscored the awkwardness of his position in the house. The practice is uncommon; however, it is a means of passively excluding someone.

Passive exclusion is the preferred manner with which to deal with unacceptable behaviour in Boddington. Although joking such as is present in the Wing Wars songs may be a good way to air grievances publicly, only those grievances which will not cause

major problems are aired as part of a joking relationship. Granted, the songs may be crude, and they probably reflect deeper issues such as men's attitudes towards women in the house or women's attitudes towards men, but they are understood as jokes in which each group plays up the other groups' insecurities. The house dinner, however, is a public way in which the house can make public judgements of its members with little or no fear of retribution, when only the house is present and the end of the year is looming.

"Participation" in the traditions of Boddington Hall and the distinction between "a good frosh" and one who "tries too hard" ultimately implies more than a blind acceptance of frosh process and residence life: one is encouraged to adopt, adapt and improve them. They want to see each new student change into not only a house member but also an active tradition bearer. The most peculiar part as a researcher was that I realised that some of the people who had participated in my study, the "Frosh Leaders," were average people. This leads one to wonder why people who live in residence become Frosh Leaders and participate in "froshing" the first years.

Perpetuation: "Why Do Good People Do Bad Things?"

The "bad things" that residence students do ties in with the preconceptions about residence life. The students are in a liminal state in which their previous rules are suspended, and they are in the process of being instructed about the new rules of the culture they are immersed in. This liminal state is a period similar to carnival and festival. In the name of tradition, new students are subjected to initiation. But this initiation serves a purpose. As was said in *Thin Ice*, "people who arrive [do so] as strangers and must, overnight, bond as brothers," and, although it may have negative

implications, “It gets you bonded with each other quicker than any other method.” The need arises because “You’re there for five, six, seven months of the year, you have to be gelled as one.” As one player added, “It’s hard to talk about it, but easy to do.”

A question occurs: if students are otherwise mild mannered and involved in the university in constructive ways, why do they participate in Frosh Week? Specifically, why do they perform the rituals to bring new members into the house? Why do they use foul language and refer to each other in derogatory ways? Why do they perform cruel pranks, and drink senseless amounts of alcohol? I would like to say that these questions were answered throughout my thesis, but they proved too complex for me to conquer.

The members of Boddington Hall have a few activities and a group behaviour that one could judgementally frown upon. These problematic behaviours can be loosely organised around two times of the year, Frosh Week and April 6th Day. There are various behaviours that also take place throughout the year which because of the limited scope of my study I was unable to collect extensive research on, two of which are exclusion (which ties into Frosh Week to a certain extent) and alcohol related behaviours (for which we can use April 6th Day as our example).

Two of the Frosh Leaders, Matt and Sam, were extremely helpful during my research: one of them was even quite like my own brother in his demeanour. They were “nice guys” who happened to do some things that were maybe not so nice, but these things were all done for what they determined to be the ultimate good of the house.

The older students seem to get involved in “froshing” because it is fun, playful and contains elements of festival and because their territory is infringed upon by new students and they need to make these new students aware of their supremacy over them.

They also see a need for some sort of instructional process because they want to keep order in their house. Frosh Week is a time in which many of the traditions of the house and acceptable modes of behaviour are taught to the new students, but taught in extraordinary ways in a particular time like no other in the calendar year. They also have good reason to begin friendships between the first year students, and the shared experience, goals and enemies help during this period. But even after Frosh Week the house behaviour is controlled through the telling of legends.

Often, legends are similar to each other, although the names change. The things that the house looks for in an individual or the behaviour that they do not condone is relatively constant. As J.D. wrote in his email:

There are lots of legends, about things that guys have done: jokes played on each other, fights, girls, how they stood up to authority, crazy things they have done (like riding a pop machine down the hill in winter) etc etc [sic]. I find though that these only last as long as the people involved are there. They die quickly because residences are a situation where young men want to create their own legends.

Although people want to create their own legends it seems that the legends often concern the same types of things and fall under the same categories, essentially, house history, behaviour to emulate and behaviour not to emulate. There are also those which fall into the urban legend category, such as the “Man in Plaid” legend, or the story of the roommate’s tainted sandwich story.¹² Many are also of the “wish fulfilment” style: for instance, a man got revenge on his roommate by letting him eat his tainted food. The man gaining revenge on his roommate is followed by tales of a man who created a room in basement for the use of residents for sexual liaisons because of lack of privacy in their

¹² The Boddington Man in Plaid narrative does not contain the supernatural elements that the Laurier tale does. Many of the men that I spoke to did not want to appear as though they believed the ghost stories,

shared rooms and residence regulations about overnight guests.

As space in universities residences becomes more contested, less available, and ultimately smaller for each individual, rites of passage such as Frosh Week will probably become more important to the overall well being of the members of the house. You need to know the people that you live with, and how better than to see them as they really are than to be on the giving or receiving end of a ritual when affectation and the identities of their old life are stripped away? What better way to deal with awkwardness about not knowing other individuals than to give individuals a shared experience within which they can interact? The initiation practices at St. Peter's are safer and more functional than I first thought they would be. The events are intentionally absurd; the night chanting, the food slide, and the food punishment are essentially ridiculous, but ultimately safe. Frosh Leaders are elected, their performances are culturally scripted, they control the chaos they create, and they self-regulate over and above any guidelines that the university imposes.

I became a friend to many of the individuals that I spoke to during my time at St. Peter's, yet there are certain things that they do that I could not condone. But what they do does serve a purpose, in terms of quickly and efficiently defining group boundaries and dynamics, even though the way in which that purpose is served may be questionable.

'Persecution': "What Does Drinking A Bottle of Salad Dressing Have To Do With Academic Success?"

An academic at a presentation asked me the above question that came to embody,

although they agreed that many women believed in ghosts.

for me, one particular aspect that I was struggling with. Drinking a bottle of salad dressing has nothing to do with academic success, but it has a great deal to do with social success. Orientation week is supported by the administration, and it functions to teach new students about academics and about the campus. Frosh week is supported by the house, and it functions to get new students to know their neighbours. Residence Frosh Leaders not only do not schedule opposite orientation events, they actively encourage their students to attend the orientation events. Many of the people on the campus orientation committee also live in residence. The two initiations complement each other although they have different functions and represent the two worlds in which the Boddington members live operate, the social world and the academic world. Living in residence is often directly at odds with the academic world: April 6th Day, for example, has in the past been understood as a direct assault on the academic side of campus. Likewise, many people find their duties within the house, which are essentially social duties, such as frosh committee member, house committee member or proctor, directly at odds with their academic goals.

Overall, the administration of St. Peter's (and I believe that this is probably true of other institutions as well) has managed initiation and April 6th Day activities by simply reacting to events: they have not educated individuals and changed attitudes. Some events have been altered. For example, this year, the Boddington Frosh Leaders were told they could not stay out past a certain time for their Black Sunday activity. However, by telling the Frosh Leaders this at the last minute they were not able to make other plans. It made them look ineffectual in front of the frosh, although they tried to make light of it. The first year students were therefore to a certain extent cheated out of

their end of the week ritual. At least if the leaders had known that there were going to be changes they could have prepared everyone for it, but instead they felt stupid and distanced from the proctors who handed down this sentence. The frosh did not know what happened and this caused a rift between them and the Frosh Leaders. Betty and Ainsley were quite disappointed by that night and felt that the least the Frosh Leaders could have done was to bother to do something else.

The administration's treatment of this initiation event as unimportant sent the message to the students that their social world and they themselves are unimportant. Residents often told me that they felt ignored, singled out, or deliberately attacked (i.e. persecuted) by the administration and faculty when it reacted negatively to their actions. Long-term change will come when students in residence become aware of the consequences of their actions so that they can change the process themselves. Rituals that are never performed in public can nevertheless survive for a long time. For example, although Laurier and Sacred Heart had to change a line in one of their songs "SPU Froshette" from "Here are my room keys" to "I'm not a big tease," another objectionable song unbeknownst to the administration continued to live on. The song "The S & M Man" is still known by Boddington residents. Although none of them felt comfortable singing it, they told me the verses in order for me to write them down and have a record of them.

The S & M Man (Field notes 64)¹³

(A parody of "The Candyman" from Willie Wonka and the Chocolate Factory)

¹³ See Appendix III: Boddington Songs for annotation.

Chorus:

The S&M man, the S&M man, the S&M man
Cause he mixes it with love and makes the hurt feel good.

Who can take a baby
Who can take a baby?
Put her on the bed
Put her on the bed
Grab it by the ears
And fuck the soft spot in its head

Who can take a cheese grater
Strap it on his arm,
Shove it up her cunt
And make vagina parmesan

Who can take a pregnant lady
Throw her on the bed
Fuck her so hard
That the foetus gives you head

Who can take the pope
Shove him in a pew
Fuck him so hard
That he thinks that he's a Jew

The residents of Boddington have deliberately censored themselves out of respect to the women living in the house (Appendix III has a brief discussion on this song). This song was not taught to the incoming students, at least not in the past two or three years. The last memory many of the residents had of it being sung was by the legendary house member on a hired bus after a "smoker," a pub-crawl outside of the university town in a nearby city. That was about two years ago and apparently at the time members of the house rushed to stop him from singing the song, another incident of social control (informal conversations, September 2001). I could find few people that would talk to me

about the song, and those that did were fourth year students, most of whom only told me a verse at a time. Apparently it was known to members of the rugby team as well, although they were also very uncommunicative and sheepish about it when I asked.

Often, Boddington prides itself on being bad because they feel that reflects the expectations of members of the university community. This bad boy image is popularised and communicated through things like “Nothing Good Can Come From This,” a phrase that was popularised by a member of the house and became the slogan for the back of Boddington Hall’s 2002 April 6th Day t-shirts. In reality, the men and women who live in Boddington are average individuals. They may do things that university administrators would rather they did not, but that is all part of the “social puberty” aspect of the rites. In observation, most male residents treated women fairly and equally. Although they are not included in a mandatory or organised sort of way which may allow them to be more involved in the house, they are incorporated organically and not thought of as different from the men. In some ways this is positive but in other ways the decks are stacked against them, as they found during Wing Wars when they have to compete at video games and other activities that are typically male oriented.

The house operates as inclusively as a society run by people in their situation – social pubescents – possibly could. The house committee executive is comprised of eight people, six men and two women, an unintentional ratio which comes close to mirroring the numbers of men and women in the house, two third men and one third women. Because of positions like wing reps and proctors who live on the floors that they are in charge of, there will also always be women in important positions in the house in a direct

correlation to the ratios of the house.

But what is the real standing of women in the house? As Sam said during his Black Sunday address “There is always someone in the house who doesn’t know how to respect women, and we will find you” (Field recording 7, 9 Sept. 2001). During our interview Matt and Sam also told me about how in a previous year one member of the house was accused of sexual assault and had to virtually seek asylum in a proctor’s room. Members of the house waited in a mob to “talk” to the guy. These attitudes are still problematic because they suggest that women must be protected, however, they are the same social controls that are exhibited by Boddington in all other aspects.

Women, as we saw in Chapter Four, were painfully aware that they lived in a “guy’s house” which was stacked favourably towards men. There are attempts at inclusivity, the head Frosh Leader said that if anyone told the women that Boddington was a male house they should “kick them in the nuts” (Field recording 6, 8 Sept. 2001). Women, though, still have a marginal status because they have smaller numbers and less positions of power. There are often times, as was the case during April 6th Day, when the women are unintentionally excluded through the use of male games or male play. Even the head shaving of Frosh Week in Chapter Three can be seen as an exclusionary act, because of cultural notions surrounding appropriate hairstyles for women, the women were reluctant to shave their heads. The status of women is less than ideal, however, it is not dire. As was illustrated by the Frosh Leaders sentiment and as I will discuss later in the Chapter, the students seem to willing to be more inclusive, but they lack the tools.

Conclusion

Residents of Boddington Hall form a community that is broken apart, year after year, yet retains its customs and traditions by teaching them to initiates. It is a community that relies highly on oral instruction and word of mouth, a community which is always in flux. Members leave the community, often never to return, and new people arrive every year and request membership into the group. Somehow, the students still manage to have a sense of ongoing tradition and house identity which is gained through extreme play and ritualised behaviours. This sense of tradition and identity create a viable community and a feeling of personal identity and belonging for the members of the residence community.

In Chapter One, the Introduction, I discussed my interest in university rites and my personal experience as a student that lived within residence for a number of years in various capacities. I also looked at the specifics of St. Peter's in order to show it as both a unique and commonplace institution, suggesting that there may be analogous events happening at other universities. I explained here why I chose to look at Boddington Hall rather than the other residences on campus. I also used Chapter One as a chance to identify some of the problems which students face as they are stereotyped, and to deal with the perception of male sexuality on campus.

In Chapter Two, a chapter which examined theoretical and literary influences, I introduced the various frameworks which I had consulted in my approach to the topic, most notably, those provided by van Gennep and Turner. I concluded that my topic was at the crossroads of campus lore and rites of passage, although it included elements of bawdy lore and popular culture. In this Chapter I set up the framework which was intrinsic for the ethnological approach which I employed in Chapters Three and Four.

I argued in Chapter Three that a number of community building activities which take place during Frosh Week. Many of these, like the chants offs, defend public space and reaffirm membership in the group as well as the separation of groups. Space definition, separation and identity are expressed through the performances of house songs. House songs, for Boddington, can also function as shibboleths; the public group chant is a little more drab than the songs of the other houses, however, they have hidden songs which the other houses do not. Songs such as “Chicago” and “Rat’s Ass” reaffirm membership in the group. They are seldom used in public and when they are they are not used repetitively, keeping them somewhat unfamiliar to the other houses. These songs are not performed by Boddington for others, they are performed by Boddington for itself.

Similarly, Boddington is one of the few houses that has observers for its events, such as the punishment. A certain number of people from Sacred Heart happened to observe the event because they were on their way to supper, however, the other audience members were comprised of a group of house members, past and present. Boddington also lines up its frosh with military precision, something the other houses do not do, it instructs in outdoor space often under the cover of darkness or in an off campus field, the sole house to do so. Perhaps this is because unlike Laurier and Sacred Heart, who can compete against each other or work together, they have no male competition and no fear of losing traditions or of being bested.

My examination of April 6th Day in Chapter Four shows a number of similarities to Frosh Week, and I feel it illustrates that this Boddington festival is indeed part of the rites of passage associated with Boddington. Frosh Week had the handshake from the president, Sam, while on April 6th Day the president handed each resident a beer. In the

president's room Matt and Sam were taking money for t-shirts, the same as they did Frosh Week. The legend, an important piece of house lore, was learned. There were public performances in the cafeteria and a uniform that marked members of the house as participants in this event.

The themes of "social puberty" were again raised through the songs of Wing Wars. Instead of insulting other houses through song, the members of the house now insulted each other, perhaps a separation stage before their transitional April 6th Day and incorporation in the form of a house dinner. The house dinner also serves as a goodbye to those who will not be returning to the house, a rite of intensification and validation of groupness for those who will be returning, and an eye opener for those who realise they are no longer welcome in the house after the presentation of the often derogatory "awards."

Although I attempted to provide a well-rounded view of life in Boddington, there were several areas which I did not fully explore during this thesis although I will touch on them here for future interest.

Future Areas of Research

The body of material associated with residents of Boddington Hall was extremely rich and varied. Although the study of campus lore is a small field and perhaps this is a further deterrent from studying this type of material, my brief entry into this area has shown me that there is extensive research to be done at university campuses across Canada. Campuses change each year with the students who trek there. This is a field that is virtually untapped and continually changing, but unfortunately, because of the

nature of undergraduate degrees and the brevity of Frosh Weeks, the window of time in which to study one group passing through these rites is limited. Indeed, as a folklorist, it would be difficult to do any comparative study of universities within the same year because of the fieldwork that would be involved. I found it difficult enough to study one residence. That being said, my study points to several areas of future research which I was unable to fully explore during this work.

There was a large body of song, legends, slang, nicknames within the campus. I collected at least twenty song texts from this university including the ones that have been cited within this text. It seems some of them may come from or be influenced by other universities, the military, or sports teams. Many contain elements of popular culture, childlore and parody. I found a number of comparative versions to the songs of the women of Sacred Heart in the Memorial University Folklore and Language Archive pertaining to the women of Memorial University's Burke House.

Without trying extensively, I collected approximately fifteen legends at St. Peter's. There were few urban legends, and those that were there had been changed to suit the university. There were a number of legends with dealt with ghosts of nuns and ghost lights, as well as mysterious men in the residence, the aforementioned "Man in Plaid," and the odd jovial legend such as those surrounding "April 6th Day" or a room in the basement of Boddington which a previous resident had built for sexual liaisons.

Slang and nicknames were rampant. They were very hard to document because of the ease in which the residents used them. Some of the slang terms are noted in Appendix V. Many of these are terms that the individuals probably came in contact with before university, some are specific to universities, and some are specific to St. Peter's.

The implications of slang and nicknames and the importance of wordplay and naming as ownership are too extensive to explore here.

Another concern that I was not able to address here involved the effects, both sociological and psychological, of the limitations on personal space and the high population density of university residences. Granted the obvious differences in liberties, residence life is comparable to prison life when approached from the perspective of space. At Boddington (and in all the on-campus houses), a 14 foot by 9 foot room is typically shared by two people. Each person has a personal strip 3 feet wide (demarcated by the width of the bed) with the middle strip shared or negotiated space (McDavid, “Girls of Sacred Heart”). The residence room must serve as social, domestic, and work space.

Space is important in residence. When a person in the house takes on a large duty (such as proctor or house president) they are provided with a single room. Many people were quick to point out to me that their rooms were bigger than other rooms in the house, and although it was true it was very difficult to see with the naked eye. The residents, however, were all well aware which rooms were bigger. Space is already an issue and it is not a problem that is going away, as the Maclean’s study suggests:

Two years ago, McGill gave up on its guaranteed residence and moved to a lottery system. Last fall, UBC – which promises on-campus housing to any first-year student from outside the Lower Mainland – was forced to convert the lounge in the Totem Park residence into temporary bedrooms, accommodating three and four to a room at a 25-per-cent discount. Meanwhile, Wilfred Laurier University in Waterloo, Ont., kept its promise of providing on-campus housing to all first-year students, investing close to \$1 million in reconfiguring two-person residence rooms to three person alternatives. (Johnston 15)

Although St. Peter’s has appropriated new space in the form of an off-campus

refurbished hotel (which was still in a renovation stage when students arrived in September 2001), space remains at a premium. St. Peter's had to make temporary rooms for students in common areas in Boddington and Laurier in anticipation that space would be found for them in a proper residence room when someone moved, left university, or did not show up.

This lack of space and the patterns that often show a blatant disregard for the student is a disturbing trend. As Maclean's goes on to note, "A surge in first-year enrolment [at Canadian universities in general] has meant that some double rooms have been converted to triples [at various institutions]" (Johnston 50). Personal space is not the only issue: problems with class size as well as faculty and teaching space are other issues that seem to be blossoming across Canada. Like other institutions, St. Peter's has also appropriated common space within the residences for various purposes, such as temporary housing of students, and in the case of Boddington's first floor lounge, in order to accommodate a wheelchair accessible room. St. Peter's seems to be doing the best that it can, but it has continued its disturbing trend of having construction continue into the fall term, and ultimately by necessity the moving of students into buildings that are still under construction.

Administrations need to not worry so much about litigation or profit and realise that most students go to university for reasons other than simply to get an education. Many go for the social experience. Often universities are seen simply as heartless institutions, and that has an effect on the students attend them. Such was the case when I interviewed some of the women in Sacred Heart. At the end of our interview, I asked them if there was anything else they wanted to tell me, and one replied wistfully "Ask me

about the construction” (Field recording 14, 3 Oct. 2002).

The workings of residence life would probably also benefit from a critical feminist approach, one which explored more fully the stratification within residences and the effects that it may or may not have on the female residents. One aspect, which I have barely scratched the surface of, is aggressive play. Many aspects of Frosh Week and Wing Wars undoubtedly fall into this categorisation, however, there are other games, such as the campus wide “Assassins,” which demonstrate a clear aggression towards other students. In this game each student that agrees to play is given a photocopy the student card of another player. The players must then hunt each other during this odd game which is apparently a campus wide source of fun that is popular throughout North America (Bronner 124-25).

Although the main focus here has been rites of passage, play is the principal tool used by the residents of Boddington for the execution of their rites. In The Ambiguity of Play, Sutton-Smith lists nine types of play (4-5), seven of which are easily identifiable in Boddington’s Frosh Week and April 6th weekend. These are: playful behaviours, informal social play, vicarious audience play, performance play, celebrations and festival, contests (games and sports) and risky play all of which are presented to a greater or lesser extent during the Boddington year.

There were many times when residents were so engaged in play that they were totally unaware of my presence, although I stood quite close to them taking pictures and writing things down in my field book. They were totally oblivious to the world around them except for the play which they were engaged in. Some members, Sam and Matt especially, kept wanting me to also get involved in the play, although I always declined.

Sam wanted me to get my head shaved at the punishment, Matt wanted to soak me at the water fight, and I was given an April 6th Day t-shirt, the uniform of a player.

Play, by its very nature, is initially wholly inclusive. It is only through the process of play that participants and non-participants, or players and non-players, are differentiated. So it is the process of play, which is analogous to the liminal state, that creates the boundaries of community. The “frivolity” of Frosh Week, Wing Wars, April 6th Day and the awards at the House Dinner works towards the building of a community with a clearly defined identity: the Boddington Raider.

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APPENDIX I: CONSENT FORM

Consent Form for Participants

I, _____, hereby allow Jodi McDavid to use voluntarily recorded materials (tape recorded interviews, questionnaires, naturalistic observation, photographs, video) described below for research towards the completion of a Master of Arts degree in the Department of Folklore at Memorial University of Newfoundland, Canada. Anticipated time commitment is 10-15 minutes for questionnaires, and/or approximately 1 hour per interview.

Description of materials:

I understand that the outcome of the research may include any the following: Master of Arts thesis, class and/or public presentations, and publication in whole or in part. I give permission to Jodi McDavid to use the materials collected in her research for academic publication and presentation with the following exceptions:

1. In the interest of providing confidentiality and anonymity to all involved in this study, I understand that::

(a) I will be referred to by a pseudonym in all research and publication conducted by Jodi McDavid.

_____ Yes
_____ No

(b) The institution will not be identified in all research and publications of Jodi McDavid.

_____ Yes
_____ No

© The researcher cannot ensure confidentiality within group interviews, as the confidentiality of other participants cannot be controlled.

_____ Yes _____ No

2. In the interest of my privacy and comfort as a participant in this study, I understand that::

(a) I can ask that parts of my interview are not recorded in any way, shape or form. I should indicate this to the researcher at the time by requesting her not to tape the conversation or, if recording is in process, to turn off the tape recorder.

_____ Yes _____ No

(b) I understand that I can decline to answer questions at any time during my participation with this project and it will not effect me in any way; I will not be penalised and I can still participate in the project in whatever way I am comfortable.

_____ Yes _____ No

© I understand that I may withdraw my participation and/or request at any time during the research that details and/or events concerning myself not be included by contacting Jodi McDavid (see address next page).

_____ Yes _____ No

3. About the materials:

I give permission for Jodi McDavid to deposit these materials in the Memorial University of Newfoundland Folklore and Language Archive (MUNFLA). I understand that MUNFLA will, at the Archivist's discretion, allow qualified persons to use the materials in connection with their research, but my identity will still be protected and no publication of the material will be made without the written permission of the Archivist. ☐ Yes ☐ No

4. Future involvement of the participant in the project::

(a) I conditionally give permission to be contacted for follow up research.

☐ Yes ☐ No

(b) I understand that I may request a brief synopsis of the project (request by checking 'yes')

☐ Yes ☐ No

Signature of researcher: _____ Date: _____

Signature of participant: _____ Date: _____

Local Address and Telephone Number: _____

Home Address and Telephone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

Please keep this information for your files.

Questions regarding the study can be directed to:

Jodi McDavid (Researcher)
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(709) 754-5734 mcdavid-brodie@sympatico.ca

Dr. Diane Tye (Thesis Supervisor)
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Memorial University of Newfoundland
St. John's, NF A1B 3X8
(709) 737-4457 dtie@morgan.ucs.mun.ca

Questions of an ethical nature can be directed to:

Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics and
Human Research (ICEHR)
Ms. Eleanor Butler
Office of Research
Memorial University of Newfoundland
St. John's, NF A1B 3X8
(709) 737-8251

St. Peter's University Research Ethics Board
Dr. _____
Research Ethics Board
St. Peter's University
Town, Province

APPENDIX II: EVENTS OF SEPTEMBER 2 TO 9, 2001

Italicised: A selection from the Campus Orientation Schedule

Bold type: Boddington Hall Frosh Week Schedule¹⁴

Underlined: Activities Boddington holds in common with other houses¹⁵

Monday Sept. 3	Tuesday Sept. 4	Wednesday Sept. 5	Thursday Sept. 6	Friday Sept. 7	Saturday Sept. 8 ¹⁶	Sunday Sept. 9
<i>Pepsi Lock in at games centre</i>	<i>BBQ</i>	<i>Regist- ration</i>	<i>Classes</i>	<i>Classes</i>	Teach Frosh song, “Rat’s Ass.”	Teach Frosh song, “I Used to Work in Chicago”
<u>Learning songs through repetition</u>	<i>Motiv- ational Present- ation</i>	<i>Playfair</i>	<i>Opening Mass</i>	<i>Lollapa- SPUza</i>	“Kegger”	<u>Black Sunday activities</u>
<u>4 p.m., Wooing</u>	<i>Social Issues Theatre</i>	<i>Induction Ceremony and dinner</i>	<i>Pizza lunch</i>	<u>Classes</u>	<u>Condiment slide</u>	
<u>10:30 p.m. impromptu chant off.</u>	<i>Karoke & Lazer tag</i>	<i>Video dance social</i>	<i>Walk downtown</i>			
	<u>5:45 a.m. to 6:45 a.m., chant off</u>	<u>No night chants, rained in the night</u>	<u>No night chants, eve of first day of class</u>			
	<u>Supper- time, Punish- ment</u>	<u>Ceremony and dinner meant few residence activities</u>	<u>Trivia night</u>			

¹⁴ Some activities are performed with other houses. Performances by small groups of people are well as performances at supper occur throughout the week with no real regularity.

¹⁵ Although Boddington may hold them in common with other houses, it does not necessarily mean that they perform them together.

¹⁶ Alcohol becomes available.

APPENDIX III: BODDINGTON SONGS¹⁷

A: Current Songs

1. We Are the Boddington Raiders (Field recording 3, 3 Sept. 2001)

We are the Boddington Raiders,
The Raiders of the night,
We're dirty sons of bitches,
We'd rather shag than fight.

This song is what I would be tempted to call an “introductory song.” At St. Peter's each house has a chant that includes their house name and that during a chant off is often the first chant to be made, as the groups arrive in the chant off space. The closest match that I could find to this song is the one listed below, a Princeton rugby song:

Radiers (sic) of the Night (Under the heading “Introductory Verses”)
<http://www.astro.princeton.edu/~wes/random/rugbylyric.html#intr2>

We're Frank Hereford's raiders.
We're raiders of the night.
We're all sons of bitches
Who'd rather fuck than fight.

So Highty-Tighty-Christ-All-Mighty,
Who the hell are we?
We're the Wham-Bam-Thank-You-Ma'am
Men from the U of V

It is interesting to note that this is a Princeton rugby song. The sports teams at St. Peter's do travel extensively and often have American tournaments. While I am not suggesting that St. Peter's students have learned their songs from Princeton, I am suggesting that there may be a cross-pollination of song through universities, which is aided by sports teams. While sports songs seem to be one ongoing area of influence, so are military

¹⁷ Italics are used throughout to denote responses to the previous lines of the songs. One person generally

songs. Sacred Heart has a song “Here We Go, Down the Hill” (Fieldtape 4) which is a parody of the military “Cassion Song” (Moore 65). While there are not direct military influences on this song, it is interesting to note that Edgar A. Palmer’s 1944 book G.I. Songs notes five songs which deal with platoons of “Raiders” (187-194). Les

Cleveland’s Dark Laughter: War in Song and Popular Culture notes a World War I song:

We’re a bunch of bastards,
Bastards are we,
We’d rather fuck than fight
For count-er-y! (61).

Also notable in We Are the Boddington Raiders is the derogatory reference to self. Les Cleveland deals with this regarding this song, as does Ed Cray in terms of university song in The Erotic Muse in a chapter called “Undergraduates Course”

2. Rat’s Ass (Field recording 6, 9 Sept. 2001 and Fieldbook, pg 65 as written by Mike)

Rat’s ass, cat’s ass
Dirty little twat
Three little blind men, sitting on a rock

Eat me, beat me
Nibble gobble chew
We’re from Boddington

So fuck you!

There was very little I was able to find out about any possible derivations or origins of this song. I chanced upon this song listed below on a website; it is apparently a dormitory song for the Riconada Cardinals of Stanford University.

“calls” the first line, and the rest of the participants sing the italicised “response.”

Writings from "The Pitt" (http://rescomp.stanford.edu/dorms/wilbur/rinconada/rinc0102/rinc_cheer.htm)

Ratshit! Batshit!
 Musty Old Twat
 69 Assholes tied in a Knot
 Eat, Suck, F*ck
 Gobble, Nibble, Chew
 We are the Cardinal

Hey, F*ck You!

3. I Used to Work in Chicago (Field recording 7, 9 Sept. 2001)

Chorus [follows each verse]:

I used to work in Chicago, the old department store.
 I used to work in Chicago, I don't work there no more.

A lady came in for a kit kat
A kit kat from the store
 A kit kat she wanted, four fingers she got
And I don't work there no more

A woman came in for some hotdogs
Some hot dogs from the store
 Some hot dogs she wanted, my foot long she got
And I don't work there no more

A lady came in for a hammer
A hammer from the store
 A hammer she wanted, and nailed she got
And I don't work there no more

A woman came in looking for some rum
Some rum from the store
 Liquor she wanted, and lick her I did
And I don't work there no more

A woman came in through the front door
The front door of the store
 The front door she wanted, the back door she got
And I don't work there no more

A woman came in looking for a Big Mac

A Big Mac from the store
 A Big Mac she wanted, my special sauce she got
And I don't work there no more

A woman came in looking for a halibut
A halibut from the store
 A halibut she wanted, the Boddington eel she got
And I don't work there no more

A man came in looking for a grape
A grape from the store
 A grape he wanted, my cherry he got
And I don't work there no more

A woman came in looking for a piano
A piano from the store
 A piano she wanted, my organ she got
And I don't work there no more

A woman came in looking for a ruler
A ruler from the store
 A ruler she wanted, my twelve inches she got
And I don't work there no more

A woman came in looking for some jelly
Some jelly from the store
 Jelly she wanted, jammed she got
And I don't work there no more

A woman came in looking for rubber boots
Rubber boots from the store
 Rubber she wanted, rub her I did
And I don't work there no more

This song was quite easily annotated. It has been discussed at length in Cray's The Erotic Muse (245-251). It is also listed in Bawdy Ballads (103), as well as More Rugby Songs, as simply "Chicago" (52-53) and The Official Book of Bawdy Ballads, as "I Don't Work There Anymore" (7-8). Some of the verses that I collected are the same as those noted in these texts, however, there are some differences which are perhaps specific to the era (Big Mac/special sauce) or specific to the house (halibut/Boddington

eel). Also unusual in the version I collected was that a woman sang a verse with a man coming into the store (grape/cherry).

4. You've Lost That Loving Feeling [wooing song]

This song in performance is the same as the commercially recorded song by the Righteous Brothers, although only the first verse and chorus are sung. There are certain similarities between the performance of the song at Boddington and in the 1986 movie Top Gun. Within the film, one pilot leads the song in an attempt to “woo” a woman in the bar. He is backed up by his friends who are also pilots. This may be another example of ostension in the group. See Chapter Three for a further discussion of the performance that accompanies this song.

B: Current song-writing within Boddington as recorded during April 6th Day¹⁸

1. 1st T.C. Wing Wars Song

Let's talk about sex, baby.
 Let's talk about 1st S.H.
 Let's talk about all the reasons that you ladies can't get laid.
 Let's talk about sex. (Field video 1, 5 Apr. 2002)

I think I'll tell you again, we're from Boddington
 you might think that we're sluts, it might seem like we're drunks
 but that doesn't mean that we're going to blow chunks
 cause to lose all our senses, that is just not typically us
 oops I fucked him again, I stole your boyfriend, got caught giving head
 oops you think I'm a cunt, I did him just once
 FUCK THAT! We're not Laurier
 You see my problem is this, I'm bitching away, wishing I didn't know first SH

¹⁸ These songs are discussed in Chapter Four; they are largely “original” songs that are parodies of popular and traditional songs.

they cry, during the lays, cause they fool around in, so many ways
 well thy lost all their dignity, and now they're loose as can be
 oops you fucked her again, you the condom, you should have said no!
 Oops you have STD's, that comes with the territory
 DON'T FUCK 1st SH. (Field video 1, 5 Apr. 2002; lyrics from the song sheet)

2. 2nd S.H. Wing Wars Song (Field video 1, 5 Apr. 2002)

[A call and response]

Those in the rest of Boddington
 They really really suck
 They don't know how to party
 And they don't know who to fuck
 They don't get any tail
 And they can't even fight
 There's nothing like 2nd S.H.
 Who are the "Raiders of the Night"

3. 2nd T.C. Wing Wars Song (Field Video 1, 5 Apr. 2002)

[Sung to the tune of "Camptown Races"]

We had sex with 1st T.C.
 Doo-dah, doo-dah
 Now we all have STDs
 Oh the doo-dah day!

[At "STDs," the men grab and/or scratch their crotches and twirl]

4. 1st S.H. Wing Wars Song (Field Video 1, 5 Apr. 2002)

U-G-L-Y you ain't got no alibi
 You ugly, hey hey, you ugly

Laurier girls like to do the walk of shame
 Too bad the guys don't remember your names
 Our boys come to you for an easy lay
 But come back to us for the rest of the day

M-A-M-A how you think you got that way
 Your mama, hey hey, your mama

Everytime we see you stuffing your faces
 That might be why you can't fit in small spaces
 We're the best, it ain't no lie
 So take your STDs and wave good bye

P-A-P-A [...]
 Your papa, hey hey, your papa

You confuse class with a night at the bar
 But wearing makeup to gym is going too far
 You're trying to [...]
 That's why you all ain't got no boobs

U-G-L-Y you ain't got no alibi
 You ugly, hey hey, you ugly

All you guys do is masturbate
 That may be why you can't get a date
 [...]
 All you do is drink and drool

U-G-L-Y you ain't got no alibi
 You ugly, hey hey, you ugly

It ain't no earthquake so you can all calm down
 It's just 1st S.H. walking around.

5. 3rd S.H. Wing Wars Song (Field video 1, 5 Apr. 2002)

[Accompanied by a guitar, the song first begins with the theme from Fraggle Rock, with accompanying hand claps. The remainder of the song is a parody of Credence Clearwater Revival's "Have You Ever Seen the Rain?"]

[...] mom's a ho
 She produces midget porn
 This ho, is a fan of sixty-nine
 For some sex you will obey
 She has arms, he says no way
 These hos, are much more than fodder.

We wanna know, why McNarland is insane
 We wanna know, if 3rd T.C. shares a brain
 And if their moms we should spay.

You can say the [...]
Is some porn that may have starred those hos
Hope they don't cut me with a knife

D----- K----- needs to grow
Every [...] they must know, they'll know
We'll know them asunder

If they wanna go, we will bring the pain
But we wanna know, what disease are had by S----
Fucking that, you'll pay

Girls they may go, but sex is where they came
Girls they may have a flow but real men do not complain
Unlike Bob, we don't pay.

C: Songs no longer sung but in the memory of some members of the house.

1. The S & M Man (Field notes 64)

Chorus:

The S&M man, the S&M man, the S&M man
Cause he mixes it with love and makes the hurt feel good.

Who can take a baby
Who can take a baby?
Put her on the bed
Put her on the bed
Grab it by the ears
And fuck the soft spot in its head

Who can take a cheese grater
Strap it on his arm,
Shove it up her cunt
And make vagina parmesan

Who can take a pregnant lady
Throw her on the bed
Fuck her so hard
That the foetus gives you head

Who can take the pope
Shove him in a pew

Fuck him so hard
That he thinks that he's a Jew

This song is a parody of "The Candyman" from Willie Wonka and the Chocolate Factory. The "S&M Man," if it is not clear, is the "sadism and masochism man." Although I was unable to find any similar textual versions in rugby song books an internet search uncovered some versions with fifty or more verses. The four verses I have here were those which I was able to collect from informants, although they are merely representative of the song, and it was suggested to me by my participants that there were many more verses but that they preferred not to go into it. All four of the verses presented here were found in the other versions of the song that I found. The anti-child, anti-women and anti-religion sentiment has doubtless lead to the waning popularity of this song as is discussed in Chapter Five. Other versions of the song that I have found via the internet often have slurs towards homosexuals usually in conjunction with comments about the other teams that they play against, suggesting that the other team is gay. Some sites which deal with the song are the following:

"Individual Rugby Songs." <<http://www.rugbysongs.net/RugbySongs.htm>>.

"The S&M Man." <<http://members.aol.com/smiley1eye/sm.html>>.

Santana, Twinkie Toes. "Rugby Drinking Songs: The S&M Man."
<http://www.easymidget.com/new/stories/0202_rugby.shtml>.

"Songs and Jokes." <<http://www.angelfire.com/sports/ubrugby/SM.html>>.

"UMBC Rugby Songs." <<http://userpages.umbc.edu/~kbeck1/rugbysongs.html>>.

"Writings from 'The Pitt'."
<http://rescomp.stanford.edu/dorms/wilbur/rinconada/rinc0102/rinc_cheer.htm>

These song annotations are not meant to be exhaustive, they merely provide an idea of the influences on the songs. It is not particularly clear if the songs are initially brought into the group orally through something witnessed at an event like a rugby tournament, or if they were at one point learned from bawdy song books and then taught to the group orally.

It should be noted that I also collected songs from the other houses during my fieldwork and these tapes will be deposited in the Memorial University of Newfoundland Folklore and Language Archive.

APPENDIX IV: CONDIMENT SLIDE CONTENTSThe Contents of the Boddington Slide

dogbones to eat
dogfood, wet and dry
eggs
vinegar
baking soda
oil
fish heads
squid
snails
milk
goat milk
gravy
poutine sauce
beans
tomato soup
ketchup, red and green
flour

The Contents of the Laurier and Sacred
Heart shared slide

Vienna sausages
cereal
pickles
cans of veggies
relish
mustard
beans
apple sauce
meatballs
tomato juice
marshmallows
Kraft dinner
ketchup
flour

APPENDIX V: SLANG IN COMMON USAGE AT BODDINGTON HOUSE 2001-2002

Poontang: as in army slang, female genitalia. In Boddington, used to refer specifically to the genitals or the sex act rather than generally to women.

Bitch: used as a friendly reference to a familiar person, attached to the end of the sentence "Pass me a beer, bitch." Not always a derogatory or submissive statement or a sarcastic one, "Way to go, Bitch." Jocular.

Raiders, Raiders of the Night: What the people of Boddington house refer to themselves as. The name may have a connection to panty raids, or the predominance of the word "Raiders" in sporting teams. The house T-shirts often read "Boddington Raiders" and these phrases are repeated in their "Introductory song."

Old Boys: a member of the house that has lived in the house for many years and since graduated or left school. There is no similar term for women in the house.

the Boys, some of the Boys: male members of the house.

Girls: female members of the house.

Ladies: potential dates for the males of the house. In the Liam legend, Matt recounts saying "Hello Ladies" to the girls walking by; this is a frequent occurrence in Boddington. Also used to refer to large groups of first year women in the female houses.

Guys: used in to refer to male groups or groups which include men and women, occasionally used in all female groups.

Texas Mickey: 3 litres of alcohol.

Case of Beer: 24 beer.

Shitfaced: exceedingly drunk, same as common usage.

An 8:30: first class of the day.

Egg McPeter: the cafeteria equivalent of an egg McMuffin. Very popular breakfast.

3rd T.P.: a system of shorthand referrals exists in order to denote wings in the house. The two buildings on either side are Sacred Heart and Thomas Pacey. A wing is then called 3rd SH, denoting that it is the third floor on the Sacred Heart facing side of the building. This system may change at a later date as there is a new building with has been built between Boddington and Sacred Heart.

The Pit: the basement of a residence building. I believe this word exists on other

campuses.

Moosepiss: the end of a bottle of beer which people typically do not drink.

Toenails: the end of a bottle of beer which people typically do not drink.

Frosh Leader: the people in charge of house orientation activities, lead by the head Frosh Leader.

Fugly: A combination of the words “fat” and “ugly” or possible of the phrase “fucking ugly.” Used to refer to a specific wing of the Boddington Hall women’s floor.

Four floors of whores, those whores: common references to the women of Laurier Hall. Meant in jest.

Walk of shame: the walk home the morning after; a person returning to the house in full view at an odd hour, obviously after a sexual encounter and often from another house. This phrase is common on the game show “Weakest Link,” although I believe that the saying predates the show. The saying is also sometimes used in sports for an individual that has failed to represent his team well during the game.

Nature walk: smoking a joint. Comes from the fact that people walk off campus in order to smoke drugs in order to only be charged federally and not on campus, therefore not chancing being kicked out of residence.

Going to Subway: smoking a joint. Alludes to Subway restaurants. Comes from the connection between munchies and smoking marijuana.

Got your jacket?: During April 6th Day this was used as coded language in my presence. It was cold enough to need your jacket to go for a nature walk.

I’m on it, Don’t you worry about it: two phrases used by the house committee as “put offs” to other members of the house.

Rape Row: A wooded trail on the university campus that runs between the two campuses.

TFB: Too Fucking Bad.

APPENDIX VI: A PUBLIC NOTICE POSTED THROUGHOUT BODDINGTON, APRIL 2002

Notice to all residents – April 6th Day Beer

To all Boddington Hall residents:

It has come to our attention that there is some controversy regarding the distribution of beer on April 6th Day. First we would like to make the idea of April 6th Day beer clear:

The beer in question is a gift to the house executive from the beer companies, usually distributed on a monthly basis. Ex: each executive gets a case of beer a month for eight months. This is done as a thank you from the brewery to the executive for brand loyalty, and the hard work that the executive does all year. In other houses, this beer is taken monthly, and is gone by April. Boddington traditionally has not done this. Past house committees, and the six house executives in Boddington this year, have NOT ACCEPTED MONTHLY CASES. Instead, we six have decided to donate OUR cases to April 6th Day.

As far as distribution goes, this is NOT a free drunk. There is no set amount of beer set aside for each person. Beer will start to be distributed at 12 noon, when the t-shirts are available. **The price of the T-Shirt does not include beer**, so do not argue with us on that point. Beer will be on a random basis. If you get some beer, consider it a gift from the house executive. If you don't, then we are sorry, but remember, this is beer that you did not pay for, thus you have not been put out at all.

We just wanted to make clear that the April 6th Day beer is physically the property of the Boddington Hall executive, and we want to share it with everyone. But, we can not promise that everyone will get what they consider "fair". Basically, if you get at least one beer, you have one more beer that you did before. **BUY YOUR OWN LIQUOR.**

We truly hope that everyone has a fun and safe April 6th Day. **PARTY HARD BITCH**



